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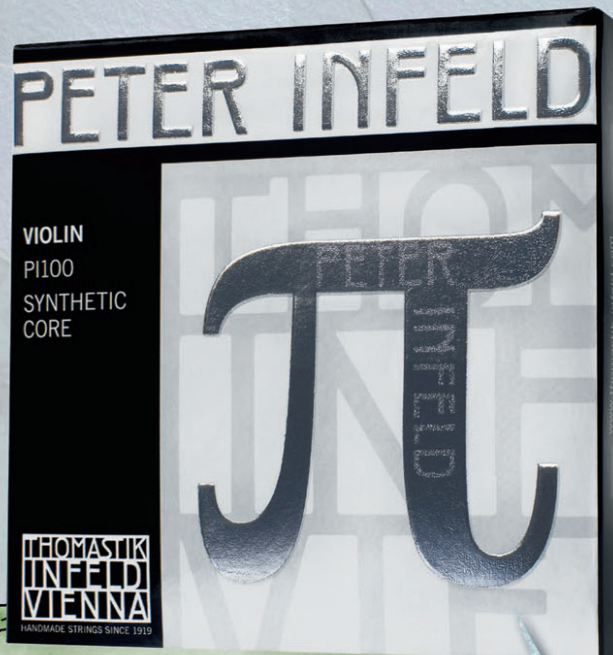
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Orin O'Brien
Ben Wolfe

CONTENTS

THE STRAD / VOL.125 NO.1493 / SEPTEMBER 2014 **EDUCATION FOCUS**



FRONT

WELCOME.....	7
SOUNDPOST.....	8
COMMUNITY.....	12
NEWS.....	14
EVENTS.....	19
PRACTICE DIARY.....	20
Cavaleri Quartet violist Ann Beilby	
COMPETITIONS.....	22
NEW PRODUCTS.....	24
LETTER FROM SPAIN.....	26
Cellist Dane Johansen performs along the Camino de Santiago pilgrim route	
LETTER FROM GERMANY.....	31
The Mittenwald International Violin and Bow Making Competition	
OPINION.....	33
Why young players need to be educated in the art of listening	
ASK THE EXPERTS.....	34
Violin pedagogues give their thoughts on how to deal with difficult children	

FEATURES

COVER STORY

Players and teachers.....	38
What makes a great tutor? Some of today's leading players and pedagogues discuss the people they studied with, and the special qualities that made them inspirational	
Magic Mountain Music Farm.....	48
Run by violin and viola pedagogue Burton Kaplan, the retreat in upstate New York promises to help adult players transform their playing in two weeks	
LSO Take a Bow.....	54
How the London Symphony Orchestra's education scheme offers young players the chance to perform with one of the world's great orchestras	
Vaughan Williams string works.....	57
The Lark Ascending was only the first of the British composer's six concertante works for strings – all of them utilising different musical forms	
Otello Bignami.....	63
One of the key figures in 20th-century Bolognese lutherie was born 100 years ago this year. We investigate the legacy of the making school he helped to create	

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54

ISO TAKE A BOW

REGULARS

IN FOCUS 68

A 1706 cello by David Tecchler

TRADE SECRETS 70

Douglas Cox's method for using glass bead to measure wood density

MY SPACE 75

Paris-based luthier Stéphane Bodart

MASTERCLASS 77

Leon Bosch on the first movement of Dittersdorf's Double Bass Concerto no.2

BASICS 84

How to vary your dynamics

ASK THE TEACHER 87

Cello pedagogue Hillel Zori

REVIEWS 88

Concerts, CDs and books

FROM THE ARCHIVE 113

DOUBLE ACTS 114

Peter Buckoke and Judith Kleinman, husband-and-wife teachers at London's Royal College of Music



SUBSCRIBE TO THE STRAD
— SEE PAGE 102

FOR CONTACT DETAILS AND
STAFF LIST, GO TO PAGE 113

COVER PHOTO ELMA AQUINO



IN FOCUS p68

LUTHERIE



MY SPACE p75

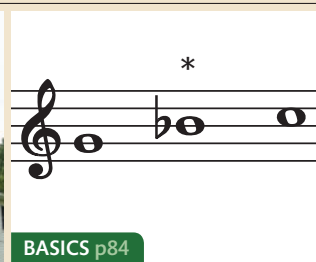


TRADE SECRETS p70

TEACHING & LEARNING



MAGIC MOUNTAIN p48

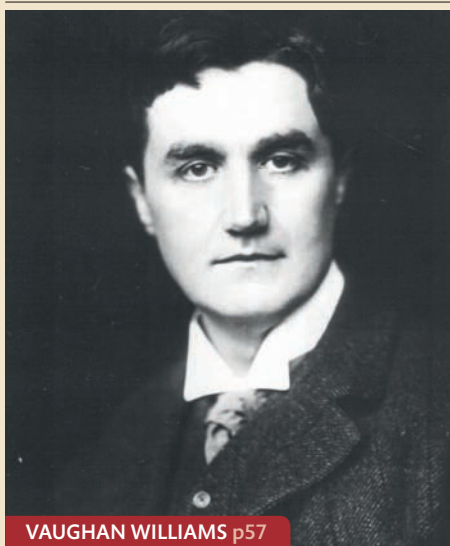


BASICS p84



MASTERCLASS p77

STRING PLAYING



VAUGHAN WILLIAMS p57



PRACTICE DIARY p20



REVIEWS p88

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WELCOME



BENJAMIN BALOVEGA

ANYONE WHO HAS EVER LEARNT to play a musical instrument will almost certainly have taken lessons at some point, especially if it is a bowed stringed instrument. Now, how many of us have, after leaving home, music college or summer school, skipped off to the next stage of our lives, never

to see or speak to our teacher again? And yet, if you're reading this magazine you will probably agree that learning to play a musical instrument is one of the greatest decisions you (or perhaps your parents) ever made. By this rationale, for many of us our music teachers will number among the most influential people to have come into our lives.

This issue is our annual education edition, and what better place to pay homage to the profession of stringed instrument teaching than by saluting some of the great string pedagogues of the 20th century – through the words of some of their distinguished pupils (page 38)? What, then, are the hallmarks of a great instrumental teacher? To be a phenomenal practitioner and a great problem solver; to be able to listen and to observe. All these things are true, and countless more, but what

**For many of us,
our music teachers
will number among
the most influential
people in our lives**

comes across in these interviews is the impression that each teacher was also a great humanist who understood the psychology of how people learn.

This is a quality that also distinguished the Bolognese maker Otello Bignami (page 63). Born 100 years ago, Bignami was a central figure in 20th-century Bolognese lutherie; he was also a wonderful teacher whose support and generosity of spirit captivated his small pool of talented students. 'Students learnt not only the techniques of lutherie but a whole philosophy,' observes his former student, Roberto Regazzi. It is also true of violin and viola pedagogue Burton Kaplan, who brings an atmosphere of

trust and positivity to his Magic Mountain Music Farm practice retreats (page 48). Like Dorothy DeLay, Cecil Aronowitz, Leonard Rose and the other teachers in our lead article, Kaplan imbues his lessons with a spirit of curiosity that is both infectious and richly rewarding.

Chloe Cutts magazine editor

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THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS

Ann Beilby (Practice Diary, page 20) is a viola soloist and chamber musician. She studied with Günter Pichler, Alex Todicescu and Ian Jewel and has played with the Cavaleri Quartet since 2008. She also performs on a freelance basis with many of London's symphony and chamber orchestras.



CHRIS CHRISTODOULOU

Douglas Cox (Trade Secrets, page 70) is a full time violin and viola maker working in West Brattleboro, Vermont, US. He studied in Mittenwald in the late 1960s and worked as a restorer in Boston before moving to Vermont in 1983.



Jeffrey Solow (Books, page 108) has toured widely as recitalist, soloist, chamber musician and teacher. He has been guest artist at many national and international music festivals and two of his numerous recordings have been nominated for Grammy Awards. He is president of the Violoncello Society of NY, past president of ASTA and professor of cello at Temple University in Philadelphia.



PATRICK SNOOK

Leon Bosch (Masterclass, page 77) is a double bass soloist and former principal bassist of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields in London. He teaches full time at the Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and also privately at his home in Tring, Hertfordshire.



Roberto Regazzi (Otello Bignami, page 63) has been a luthier for 44 years and works in Bologna, Italy, where he trained. He is the co-author of *Lutherie in Bologna: Roots & Success* (Florenus Edizioni) and has been involved in several other books on Italian lutherie.



DANIELE PEZZOLI

Tom Wilder (In Focus, page 68) studied at the Chicago School of Violin Making. He founded Wilder & Davis Luthiers in Montreal in 1991 and has served as president of the American Federation of Violin and Bow Makers. He is the editor of *The Conservation, Restoration, and Repair of Stringed Instruments and Their Bows*, which was published in 2010.



LETTER OF THE MONTH



PROMS IN THE PLURAL

The Strad is always an interesting read, and the August edition exceptionally so. However, I'm sure many other readers were as surprised as I was to see a photograph of the Royal Albert Hall on page 59 and the statement from a 1915 edition of the magazine that 'the Promenade Concerts at the Albert Hall' were about to begin – when we all know, don't we, that the promenade concerts were held in the Queen's

Hall, Langham Place (pictured), until it was bombed in May 1941.

But that is not the only place they were held. Promenade concerts with a less formal ethos were quite common throughout the 19th century, and were also held in several places in London: at the Lyceum, the Crystal Palace, and the Royal Albert Hall where they were organised by Landon Ronald and Thomas Beecham.

In 1895 Robert Newman started a series of promenade concerts at the Queen's Hall and a young and little-known conductor, Henry Wood, became closely involved with them, eventually taking them on as his own and presenting them at the Queen's Hall until May 1941 when, after the bombing, they moved to the Royal Albert Hall. It is these concerts that became known as the Henry Wood Promenade Concerts and were taken over by the BBC in 1927.

In 1914 Robert Newman issued a statement: '[The directors] take this opportunity of emphatically contradicting the statements that German music will be boycotted during the present season. The greatest examples of Music and Art are world possessions and unassailable even by the prejudices and passions of the hour.'

Other organisations – and, it seems, Landon Ronald and Thomas Beecham – took slightly different views.

VALERIE CAMPION, HITCHIN, UK

CHANGING CUSTOMS

In the light of the current problems with ivory, the Entente Internationale des Luthiers et Archetiers (EILA) would like to urge all owners of bows to refrain from having any ivory or mammoth faces replaced with other materials unless strictly necessary. To do so harms the originality of the bow and inevitably causes some degree of damage to the bow. Until a solution is found, we would encourage travelling with a bow that does not have an ivory face, even if it is less suitable.

The EILA fully supports conservation initiatives but does not believe that the ivory on bows (mostly historic) poses a threat to living elephants. For the last 25 years or so, mammoth ivory has been used widely as the most suitable, as well as environmentally responsible, alternative, but unfortunately customs officials find this difficult to distinguish from elephant ivory. For the moment, we are helping the authorities to create

a workable 'musical instrument certificate' system, which will at least allow players to travel internationally with such items. However, this does not help overcome the proposed US ban on the resale of such items and will inevitably involve an unwelcome amount of bureaucracy and cost for musicians. The EILA is working with American and European interest coalitions in the hope of obtaining exemption for objects which only contain a small percentage of ivory, as in the case of bows and a few instruments.

PETER BEARE, EILA PRESIDENT, LONDON, UK

DEVELOPING STRATEGIES

An online response to Corrado Canonici's article on how musicians can improve their business skills: bit.ly/1tRStnq

As a London-based performing arts producer and promoter, I fully agree with this article. There are many ways for today's classical musicians to build a fully scalable and profitable 'music business'



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and make money, strengthen their brands and fill concert venues using clever promotion. There are many ways to use the internet, such as by creating products with low overheads: e-books, online tutorials and lessons, webinars, virtual concerts and much more.


I find that most musicians don't know where to start, and then don't believe they can do it. It is overwhelming for many of them even to think about the business side of things. An inside tip



is to look into the way entrepreneurs set up their businesses to succeed. They too are creative, and there are many synergies between the industries.

I work with artists, musicians and arts organisations on a daily basis to help them clarify their vision and strategy regarding revenue streams, promotion and business growth. It is a wonderful feeling watching them realise the possibilities and discovering their full potential.

SOFIE HAAG, LONDON, UK



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Maurice Maréchal with his makeshift cello

CELLO IMPROVISATION

I was fascinated to read the August issue, in particular the article on soldiers' makeshift instruments ('All quiet on the Western Front?', page 53). Regarding the French cellist Maurice Maréchal's instrument, it would seem that it was made in June 1915 by two soldiers, named Neyen and Plicque, who had been carpenters before the onset of war. The pair used a door and ammunition boxes as raw materials. After the war, Maréchal became an advocate for contemporary works: Ravel dedicated his Sonata for violin and cello to him, and he also gave the premieres of works by Honegger, Ibert, Caplet and Casadesu. As for the cello, it now resides in the collection of the Cité de la Musique museum in Paris, and in 2011 a reconstruction was made for the French cellist Emmanuelle Bertrand, who now regularly uses it in concert performances.

JUSTIN PEARSON, LONDON CELLO SOCIETY, LONDON, UK

COMPOSERS, HAVE MERCY

A response to The Strad's online article: 'Faking it – the great unmentionable of orchestral playing': bit.ly/MpEQsI

A composer has an obligation to respect the performer, and music that is physically dangerous to play is in my opinion abusive. Something is wrong when this happens, regardless of the glory of the message. For example, there is a very rapid octave passage that comes at the end of the first section of Schubert's *Wandererfantasie*. It is impossible at speed, and at least one famous pianist hurt himself permanently

while attempting to overcome its absurd demands. Musically it adds very little to what it would have been had it been rendered in single semiquavers.

In another dimension, extreme avant-garde composers such as Stockhausen often atomised musical structure to a point where there was no kinaesthetic continuity for the performer to swing with. An orchestra member was often reduced to the role of a computer byte. Faking it at this level is a matter of survival in such music, as even Stockhausen himself once admitted. David Tudor wryly confessed a little faking of his own, shortly before he abandoned piano playing.

But it should also be acknowledged that this ushered in a revolution in statistical notation that extended from Franco Evangelisti and Penderecki to John Cage. These innovations kept the pointillistic fireworks ablaze while giving the performer a break in the realisation of such explosive passages

that were impossible to play using traditional notation. The innovations that revolutionised modern music were, in part, ethical accommodations for what this style of music was doing to its performers.

Now, virtuosity is sport, and all orchestra players in an overpopulated field are virtuosos, or close to it, while the contribution of composers continues to decline. To any composer writing today: please remember that you are writing for breakable fellow humans, and you need them unbroken – both as a practical and as a humane matter.

JOHN DINWIDDIE, VIA FACEBOOK

IMPOSSIBLE DEMANDS

Regarding Jay Ifshin's Opinion piece on the US ivory ban in the August issue ('Tipping point', page 31), I have three bows with ivory frogs, made by a luthier in the early 1980s. However the frogs, two of them gold-mounted and one silver-mounted, were

made from ivory that the bow maker had had for decades. Indeed, he had made two of the frogs years before he made the bows, certainly long before the ivory ban. I am vehemently opposed to killing elephants for their ivory, but the law as it stands is just plain stupid.

ANNE DALES, VIA FACEBOOK



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What you've been reading, watching and commenting on this month at www.thestrad.com and through our social media channels

THE THREE MOST VIEWED NEWS STORIES



- 1 French postal service reports cello bow lost and then has the item auctioned bit.ly/1maLlIA
- 2 Study finds childhood musical training enhances cognitive brain function bit.ly/U5CjY0
- 3 Violinist Hilary Hahn cancels all performances for six weeks bit.ly/1neDWJW

THE THREE MOST VIEWED FEATURES



- 1 There is no such thing as a piano 'accompanist' bit.ly/1kmpRQp
- 2 Too few conductors understand their double bass section bit.ly/1o1PGk2
- 3 When should a child start learning a stringed instrument? bit.ly/1neDWJW

THE THREE MOST WATCHED VIDEOS

- 1 A cello implodes bit.ly/1xxzSPC
- 2 Itzhak Perlman on practising bit.ly/TWVH9j
- 3 Anne-Sophie Mutter performs the Sarabande from Bach's Solo Violin Partita no.2 in D minor bit.ly/UL1teN



ONLINE COMMENTS

Julian Lloyd Webber's comment that many music competitions were 'rife with corruption' (see page 15) touched some nerves on *The Strad's* Facebook page: bit.ly/1tSeY92

Örn Leifsson The problem is diminished if you make it so that the judges can only listen to contestants and not see them. Better still, forget about competitions: how can you compete in art? It's too subjective.

Laurence Lubin Daniel Ferro, after judging an important American voice competition, told me that

during the deliberations 'someone' excused himself, saying he had to call NY and find out who was supposed to win. Just saying.

Andrew Hardy And as Bartók said, 'Competitions are for horses, not artists.' Though horses probably shouldn't have to be subjected to such foolery either.

Alexander Deme

Wherever big careers, big reputations and big money are at stake, the stench of corruption hangs in the air. Jurors doing deals are hard to stop. Not every player became prominent through competence alone. **Veritas Gnosis** I think that all auditions I ever took were fixed.

TOP TWEETS

@ReallyNotAaron (Aaron Van Heyningen) responds to the Ask the Experts column on protecting your instrument in hot weather bit.ly/1ueKRIQ

Thanks @TheStradMag Great advice for the summer. In NYC the humidity can cause tight pegs and high strings

@jspwoodrow (James Woodrow) reads Aaron Rosand's blog on how violin recitals have lost their glamour bit.ly/1xFZVBo

@TheStradMag I'd much rather hear a sonata recital than virtuoso rubbish pieces or concerti with piano

@soalmila (Atso Almila) replies to Kati Debetzen's argument that young musicians should be given access to historic instruments bit.ly/1xgUJ6T

@TheStradMag My teacher said you get money and prizes when you don't need them any more

PICTURE OF THE MONTH



New York Philharmonic principal cellist Carter Brey (left) with Lorin Maazel, who died in July. Read Brey's tribute to the conductor at: bit.ly/1p8DmQJ

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NEWS

TOP STORIES **THIS PAGE** / EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD 19 / PRACTICE DIARY 20
COMPETITIONS 22 / NEW PRODUCTS 24 / LETTER FROM SPAIN 26
LETTER FROM GERMANY 31 / OPINION 33 / ASK THE EXPERTS 34

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String pedagogue Malcolm Layfield charged with rape

MALCOLM LAYFIELD, THE FORMER head of strings at the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) in Manchester, UK, has been charged with one count of rape. The alleged offence – against a then 18-year-old – dates back to 1982, when he was a violin teacher at the city's Chetham's School of Music, but is said to have taken place outside term time.

Layfield, 62, resigned from his position at the RNCM last year after police began investigating allegations made against him as part of Operation Kiso, the inquiry into sex abuse at Chetham's and the RNCM. As *The Strad* went to press, he was due to appear before Manchester City Magistrates' Court on 14 August.

The investigation began in February 2013, following the conviction of former Chetham's director of music Michael Brewer, who was jailed for six years and stripped of his OBE. His victim was violinist Frances Andrade, who died a week after giving evidence



of sexual abuse at his trial. At the inquest, coroner Richard Travers said that the 48-year-old Andrade had been 'failed' by mental health services, and that new rules were needed to ensure vulnerable witnesses were supported.

'There was a real failure to provide Fran with care, and some two months before it was recognised that she needed this,' Travers told the inquest

at Woking Coroner's Court. Andrade was taking antidepressants and had overdosed twice before her death, once in December 2012 and once in January 2013. Her husband, musician Levine Andrade, told the inquest that his wife, who only came forward when a friend reported Brewer to the police, 'fell into incredible despair' and felt as if she had been the one on trial.

ISM's Protect Music Education secures £17m in extra funding for UK children

THE UK GOVERNMENT HAS pledged a further £17m for the county's network of 123 music education 'hubs'. The total amount of funding for music hubs in 2015–16 will therefore rise to £75m. The government's recommendation to local authorities that funding for music education should cease has also been reversed. The announcement is being hailed as a triumph for the Protect Music Education campaign, launched by the Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM) in April this year.

The campaign, aimed at safeguarding music service funding and the work undertaken by the National Music Plan for Music Education, was established in England in 2011. Although the government made a commitment to funding local music education

hubs until 2014–15, music services were at that time facing cuts 'to all their funding', according to the ISM.

In a statement, UK schools minister David Laws said his department had 'received a large volume of responses to the consultation relating to the provision of music services.'

ISM chief executive Deborah Annetts responded to the announcement saying: 'We are delighted that the minister has chosen to withdraw the damaging guidance to local authorities that they should cease funding music services.'



Cellists can be adrenaline 'thrivers' or 'crumplers', study finds

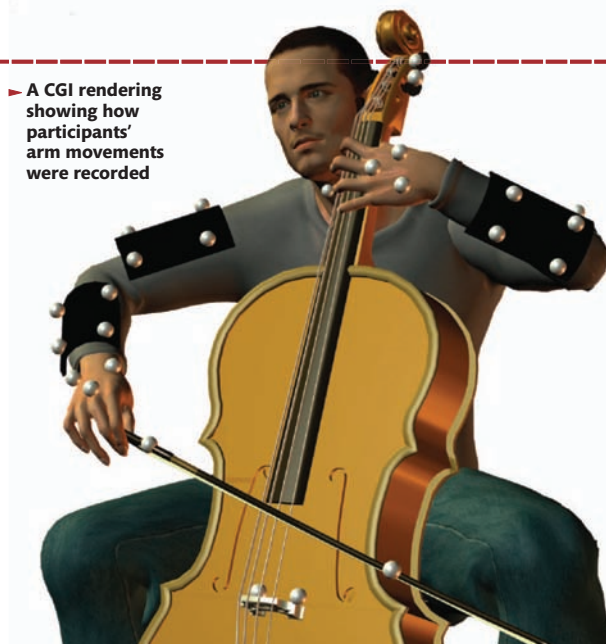
A NEW STUDY INTO CELLISTS' BEHAVIOUR has identified two different reactions to performing on stage. Researchers at the University of Birmingham found that the musicians could be categorised as either 'thrivers' or 'crumplers' when placed in a performance environment.

In the study, 24 cellists had their arms dotted with tiny reflective discs, so that motion-capture cameras could monitor the angles of their left elbows as they played. At the same time, their heart rate was monitored using special ear-clips, to record changes in their adrenaline level.

The results showed that all 24 cellists had much higher heart rates when performing in public compared with when performing alone. But when comparing the position of the bowing arms, the research team found that non-anxious cellists played with more open elbows, which generally helped them to reach the high notes in the music they were playing. The more anxious players performed with a more closed elbow position. The team characterised these two groups as adrenaline 'thrivers' and 'crumplers' respectively.

The research also found that in the presence of an audience, the cellists tended to become less variable in their left-arm shifting movements, and played more closely to the metronome beat.

► A CGI rendering showing how participants' arm movements were recorded



The report concluded that a change in adrenaline levels is not necessarily an indication of stage fright, and in fact can be beneficial to a player. The authors also suggested that symptoms such as a racing heart and sweaty palms should be termed 'performance arousal'.

Cellist Adrian Bradbury, a tutor at London's Royal Academy of Music and co-author of the paper, said, 'We would be interested to see if these behavioural findings are replicated in other disciplines, for example sport. And it would be fascinating to judge performance anxiety therapies by testing their success rates using this motion-capture technology.'

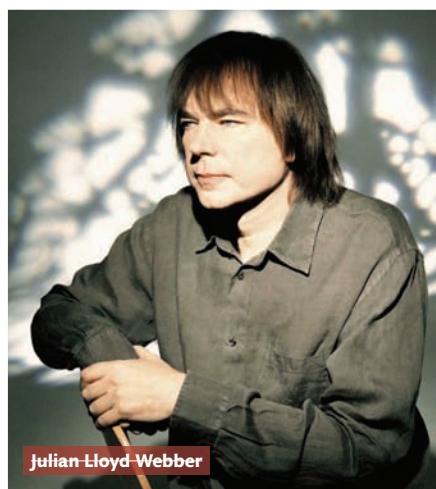
Music competitions are rife with corruption, says cellist Julian Lloyd Webber

JULIAN LLOYD WEBBER HAS HIT OUT at classical music competitions, claiming that many are rife with bribery and dishonesty. Writing in *The Times* newspaper, the British cellist said, 'Almost all music competitions are corrupt and exist only as a way for teachers to promote their own pupils.'

'Everyone knows it, but no one says it, because when you're in the profession, you don't,' he continued.

'There are obvious exceptions, such as BBC Young Musician of the Year, which is not corrupt at all, but you have these competitions for violins, cello, piano and it's all about who you studied with.' Music students 'have to get the right teacher or there's no point in entering,' he added.

Lloyd Webber announced his retirement from playing because of a herniated disc in his neck in April this year. His final performance as a cellist was on 2 May at the Forum Theatre, Malvern, with the English Chamber Orchestra. Two more recordings will follow this year.



Julian Lloyd Webber

► **VIOLINIST HILARY HAHN** has been forced to withdraw from all of her appearances for six weeks due to an inflamed muscle. According to her agent, Hahn was expected to resume her concert schedule in September.

CORRECTIONS

In the June issue 'Instrument Contracts' feature we misattributed a quote made by Florian Leonhard to Christopher Reuning in the caption that accompanies Reuning's photograph. The quote is correctly attributed in the main article.

In our article about Musicians without Borders ('Bridging Divides', August) the interview with double bassist Danny Felsteiner contained an incorrect figure concerning the estimated number of Rwandan women, children and infants who contracted HIV during the time of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The correct figure cannot be confirmed.

Violinist Jennifer Pike performs a passage from Vaughan Williams's *The Lark Ascending* (see page 57) in the organ loft of Westminster Abbey. The performance, with organist Daniel Cook, took place on 4 August during a candlelit service, marking 100 years since the outbreak of the First World War. The service also included music by Bach and Elgar, and a newly commissioned work by British composer David Matthews. Photo: Andrew Dunsmore/ Westminster Abbey



OBITUARIES

**IK-HWAN BAE**

South Korean-born violinist and pedagogue Ik-Hwan Bae died on 24 July at the age of 57. A sought-after soloist in Europe, Asia and the US, he taught at the Manhattan School of Music and the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, and was on the faculty of Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music from August 1999 until his death. He also gave frequent masterclasses and was a jury member for some of the world's most prestigious competitions.

Born in Seoul on 19 November 1956, Bae made his professional debut with the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra at the age of twelve. He graduated from New York's Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School

of Performing Arts in 1976 and from the Juilliard School, where he studied with Ivan Galamian, in 1980. He received the second prize at the 1985 Queen Elisabeth Music Competition in Brussels and was a prizewinner at the ARD International Music Competition in Munich in 1984.

A passionate chamber music advocate, Bae was artistic director of New York's Bargemusic concert venue for 13 years until 1995. More recently, he led South Korea's conductorless Hwaum Chamber Orchestra as concertmaster on tours to Kraków, Poland, and to the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico. He recorded for the Delos, Koch, RCA and ECM labels.

'The passing of Ik-Hwan Bae marks a huge loss not only for our faculty and community but for the music world at large,' said Stephen Wyczynski, chair of the Jacobs string department. 'He was an elegant and poetic violinist who made an indelible impact on all who heard him. He was a dear colleague and friend. Our condolences go to his beloved wife, Sung-Mi Im, and his son Subin.'

► **ONE OF THE TWO MEN** who attacked Milwaukee Symphony concertmaster Frank Almond and stole his 1715 'Lipinski' Stradivari violin has been sentenced to three and a half years in prison. The attacker, Universal Allah, was also ordered to pay around \$4,000 in lost wages and ambulance fees to Almond. Valued at \$5m, the 'Lipinski' has been on permanent loan to Almond since 2008.



► **DUTCH VIOLINIST EMMY VERHEY** is to retire from playing in 2015. The 65-year-old (above) has had a performing career of more than half a century, having given her first concert aged twelve. As well as making over 50 recordings, in 2006 she established the annual three-day Emmy Verhey Festival in her home town of Zaltbommel.



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Playing with time

US In October 2013, seven composers were commissioned to write works for cello and electronics for a Miami-based project, 'Cellotronic Games'. Conceived by cellist Jason Calloway and multimedia artist Juraj Kojas, the project looks at the development and diversification of computer games over the past 50 years. Calloway premieres one of the works, *Short Long* by US composer Ethan Frederick Greene, this month, with electronic input provided by Kojas.

As its title suggests, *Short Long* is in two sections: one in which every note is short, the other in which every note is long. It comprises one page of instructions and another of note pitches grouped within cells of varying length. The piece lasts around seven minutes in total. 'I'm free to do what I like within

each cell,' says Calloway, 'as long as the duration of each note is appropriate and I vary the playing technique: bowing, plucking, harmonics, multiple-stops and everything in between.' As he plays the music on his amplified cello, the sound feeds into an effects pedal connected to a computer program that generates images on a large screen behind him on stage, creating a live link between classical music and 21st-century video games.

'This piece provides a unique challenge that is both very exciting and very frightening,' says Calloway. 'I have only been told which notes to play: there are no musical directions, other than what is written in the accompanying text, and no rhythms. It's incumbent on me as the performer to make the piece come alive.'



Ethan Frederick Greene
***Short Long* world premiere**

6 September, Wynwood, FL.
www.ethangreene.org/performances

US

INSTRUMENT CONVENTION

This year's Violin Society of America competition and convention has been paired with the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis. As well as listening to competition rounds, visitors can explore an instrument exhibition and attend various lectures on lutherie.

VSA Convention and Competition 15–21 September, Hyatt Regency Hotel, IN. www.vsa.to

FINLAND

SIBELIUS CELEBRATION

Violinist Jaakko Kuusisto and pianist Heini Kärkkäinen, give a recital of previously unheard works by Sibelius, and Ilya Gringolts performs the rarely performed original version of the Violin Concerto with the Lahti Symphony Orchestra, during a four-day festival dedicated to the Finnish composer.

Sibelius Festival 4–7 September, Lahti. www.sinfoniahti.fi

AUSTRIA

FOLK FESTIVAL

Hardanger fiddles, Tyrolean violins and other Nordic folk instruments are performed alongside yodellers and joikers at this contemporary music and folk festival exploring music from Norway, Denmark and Iceland. Performers include the Cikada Ensemble and the Hugo Wolf Quartet.

Tyrol New Music Festival 11–27 September. www.klangspuren.at/klangspuren-schwaz

CZECH REPUBLIC

DVOŘÁK IN PRAGUE

The Bennewitz, Ebène and Pavel Haas quartets, violinists Josef Špaček and Vadim Repin, violist Antoine Tamestit, cellist Jakub Tylman and the Czech Philharmonic are among the performers in concerts featuring Dvořák's Violin Concerto, symphonies, chamber works and a variety of other repertoire.

Dvořákova Praha Festival 7–22 September, Prague. www.dvorakovapraha.cz/en



ANN BEILBY

The violist of the UK's Cavaleri Quartet prepares for a competition

THERE IS SO MUCH MUSIC floating around in my head at the moment. Late at night, before I go to sleep, certain passages pop into my mind: something we'll play this week, then another thing we'll play the week after. The Cavaleri Quartet is preparing for a quartet competition and I have a mountain of music to learn, but I don't have much time before the others arrive for today's rehearsal. I begin my practice with C major, following the basic scale pattern of the Flesch system: one octave on each string in different positions, with arpeggios, broken 3rds and chromatic scales, starting from the C string. This simple ritual gives me a good foundation for the next stages of my practice – it sets up my intonation and relaxes my fingers as I work slowly through each bow stroke. I think carefully about the feel of each bow division and try to eliminate any hints of tension or portato. After I have played on each string, I practise the four-octave patterns, playing slowly and with control, shifting in slow motion with soft fingers.

For musical balance, I think it's essential to continue practising major solo repertoire while playing in a quartet. At the moment I am learning the Viola Sonata by the British composer Rebecca Clarke. It's a great way to start the day, with its big tunes and virtuosic passages – I can really enjoy playing on the A string and making a lot of sound.

We are playing Janáček's 'Intimate Letters' and Mozart's Quartet in D minor K421 for the first round of the quartet competition. In the Mozart there are only a few small details I want to look at, one of which is a strange sforzando motif passed through the quartet in the first movement. No matter how many times we perform it, I still feel lucky when it sounds the way I want it to. The others are arriving in two hours, so I skip ahead to my solo variation in the finale. This again has a phrase with a very curious sforzando marking,



When we're preparing for a competition or a big tour, we need to be highly efficient with our time

positioned somewhere entirely different from where one might naturally place it. The best way to tackle the phrase is slowly, breaking it into smaller cells, perfecting them and gradually connecting them back together.

I turn to the metronome in the final hour before the quartet arrives. We are learning Japanese composer Akira Nishimura's Second Quartet, 'Pulses of Light' – a deeply rhythmic piece that we love, but which

terrifies us a little. There is a section in the opening movement that features heavily in my pre-slumber panics: the quartet cascades through heavily layered and highly irregular patterns of hemidemisemiquavers (♩) in 3/8 at ♩ = 168. Finding an internal pulse while responding to the score is challenging, but it is necessary in order for each of us to build a solid rhythmic foundation so that our parts can bounce off each other when we are together.

I start at half speed, trying to make sure the notes have an equal attack and weight to them and sticking with the metronome all the way. I wait until I have done half the passage successfully three times in a row before I increase the tempo marginally. Then I repeat this method for the second half of the passage. After 20 minutes I skip to the end of the piece, where I work on more rhythms, again starting slowly and making sure that each note has the right articulation and sound quality.

NOW THE QUARTET has arrived. When we're preparing for a competition or a big tour, we need to be highly efficient with our time. I have recorded all the concerts we have done recently, and we have each been making performance notes on a different piece. We don't have time to discuss these in the rehearsal, so we have been emailing each other at all hours with our respective lists.

We start with the Janáček, which I love: it's a mad fusion of harmonic colours, sound worlds and emotions. The viola plays a key role in leading the quartet through all the different worlds to be discovered, and I must be fearless in breaking away from the accompanying parts to deliver these statements. I can play the quartet from memory now, which really helps when I am on stage with my heart raging at a million beats per hour. We have found the greatest challenge to be maintaining our calm every time the music shifts



from a complete frenzy of intensity to a delicately sobbing lament.

We begin by breaking down the intonation of all the chordal passages in the first movement: first we check the octave voices in the violins, then we add the other line of the first violin part. There are a few passages constructed in this way, so we continue to work like this for about 20 minutes. We refine some of our tempo choices, going for a slightly broader and heroic feel in the opening of the first movement; in the development section we need to find a better way to build the accelerando into my gypsy solo. There are many areas where we need to focus on chordal intonation throughout the piece, so work progresses slowly but surely.

After a quick break, it's time for the Nishimura. We start with the first section I practised this morning, and we dare not play it faster than half speed to

begin with. The poor quality of the print, the tiny size of the staves and the slight misalignment of each part in our individual scores mean that we make a few unpleasant discoveries when we examine the music more closely: we are playing our note groups out of time with each other by a hemidemisemiquaver in two places. It's frustrating, but it's a small detail and the issue is easily resolved. We quickly move on to rhythmic work, recording each pattern as our tempo increases, picking up details here and there, and trying to stay calm. When we have finally made it through the first movement, we need another break: playing this music involves serious brain training.

We finish the rehearsal with the first movement of the Mozart, isolating three of the areas we weren't happy with when we listened to the recording of our last concert, and playing through each one slowly three times with minimal discussion.



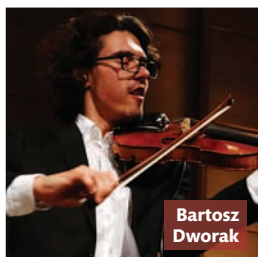
Then we run through the movement to leave behind the rhythmic world of Nishimura, freeing our playing up again before we leave each other. It's been a long day. ■

COMPETITION & AWARD WINNERS



Seiji Okamoto performs at the Leipzig Bach Competition prizewinners concert

◊ At the **International Johann Sebastian Bach Competition** in Leipzig, Germany, **Seiji Okamoto** took first prize in the violin category. The 20-year-old from Japan is a student of Kazuki Sawa at the Tokyo University of Arts. He received €10,000. The second prize went to Marie Radauer-Plank, 28, from Austria, and third to 23-year-old Dutch violinist Niek Baar.



Bartosz Dworak

◊ The inaugural Zbigniew Seifert **International Jazz Violin Competition** in Kraków, Poland, was won by **Bartosz Dworak**. The 26-year-old Polish violinist received €10,000 at the competition, held as part of the city's 2014 Summer Jazz Festival. Second prize went to 32-year-old Catalanian Apel-Les Carod Requesens, and third was jointly awarded to Poland's Dawid Lubowicz, 32, and Slovakian Roman Janoska, 25.

◊ **Ruslan Turuntaev** from Kazakhstan won the first prize in the violin category at the **International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians**. The 15-year-old, who studies with Irina Bochkova at the Moscow Conservatory, received \$3,000. Second prize went jointly to two 13-year-olds: Russian–French Roman Reshetkin and Soo Been Lee from South Korea. Third prize was shared by Russian 16-year-old Naina Kobzareva and You Min Seo, 15, from South Korea. In the cello category, first prize and \$3,000 went to La Li, 11, from China, who studies with Cao Min at the Shanghai Conservatory. Second prize went jointly to South Korean Woochan Jeong, 15, and American Gabriel Martins, 16.

◊ Violinist **Carolin Widmann** has won this year's **Schneider–Schott Music Prize**. The 38-year-old, who is interviewed on page 38 of this issue, receives the €15,000 award at a concert in Mainz, Germany, on 11 November.



Carolin Widmann

◊ Chinese violinist **Ziyu He** has won the **Eurovision Young Musicians** competition in Cologne, Germany. The 15-year-old is studying with Paul Roczek at the Leopold Mozart Institute of the Mozarteum University. Slovenian pianist Urban Stanič came second, and 15-year-old Hungarian cellist Gergely Devich took the third prize.

◊ Dutch lutherie student **Sam Brouwer** has received a special award of £1,000 for lutherie from the **Rowan Armour-Brown Memorial Trust**. The 23-year-old has recently completed his second year at the Newark School of Violin Making in the UK.

Appointments

- Violinist **Danielle Belen** has been appointed as an associate professor in the strings department of the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance, US.
- Violinist **Charles Castleman** is to become professor of violin at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music, US. Now a professor at the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music, Castleman will teach at both institutions for 2014–15, before joining the Frost School faculty full time in the autumn of 2015.
- Double bassist **Esperanza Spalding** has been named co-artistic director of the SF Jazz performing arts centre in San Francisco, US, for 2015.

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FORTHCOMING COMPETITIONS & AWARDS

Singapore International Violin Competition in Singapore, for violinists aged 17–30. First prize \$50,000 **Deadline** 30 September; competition 10–21 January 2015 **Contact** +65 6516 1300; admin@singaporeviolincompetition.com **Web** <http://singaporeviolincompetition.com>

Boris Goldstein International Violin Competition in Bern, Switzerland, for violinists born on or later than 1 January 1985. First prize CHF15,000 (£9,800) **Deadline** 1 November; competition 22–31 January 2015 **Contact** +41 33 821 21 15; info@boris-goldstein-competition.com **Web** www.boris-goldstein-competition.com

Seoul International Music Competition in South Korea, for violinists born between 19 March 1984 and 18 March 1998. First prize \$50,000 **Deadline** 14 November; competition 18–30 March 2015 **Contact** +82 2361 1415; seoulcompetition@donga.com **Web** www.seoulcompetition.com

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PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

A stand that secures digital scores to almost any surface

TABLET STAND US company Octa has developed a stand that could be useful for musicians on the move: download a score on to your tablet computer and attach your device to the Tablet Tail, and then you can affix the stand tail to almost anything before you start to play.

The inventor, Denver-based Prometheus Trotsky, is a technophile with a background in animation. 'When the iPad first came out, I found it really awkward to use,' he says. 'I wanted to create a better way to position it so that I could use it in ways that would not be possible if I were holding it.'

The stand is made from flexible, reinforced wound steel coated in silicon, and can be wrapped around objects from pieces of furniture to a seated player's leg. With its varied end-fixings, it can also be propped on surfaces, hung from hooks or clamped elsewhere. 'We wanted to create a folding clamp that was small but that could open up and grab any surface, whether a pipe, table, door or protruding rock,' says Trotsky. Buskers could even clamp their tablet to a tree branch, without having to worry about pages escaping in the wind.

The tail attaches to a range of different tablet computers, from iPads to e-readers, via a suction pad. This is secured



to the tablet's back using a vacuum pump, inspired by construction equipment used to lift heavy glass sheets. Its flexible head can be rotated in any direction, so it can be adjusted as desired when attached to the stand's tail.

'We printed lots of different prototypes using 3D-printing technology and stereolithography,' says Trotsky. 'Our first result was ugly and didn't work, but the end product is a result of three years of unbelievable dedication and persistence.'

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Journey to the end of the earth

US cellist **Dane Johansen** describes his musical odyssey recording and performing Bach's Cello Suites along the Camino de Santiago de Compostela pilgrim route in Spain

AFTER 40 DAYS walking nearly 600 miles across northern Spain with my cello on my back, I arrived at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, in the northwest, a destination for Christian pilgrims since the early Middle Ages and the site of the shrine of the apostle St James the Great. I was almost at the end of my journey, one of profound personal and musical significance that had exceeded all of my expectations. Inside, listening to the hushed tones of the pipe organ, I was finally able to stop and reflect on my expedition along the Camino de Santiago.

My journey had begun in 2008 when, inspired by a composer friend who had completed the Appalachian Trail in the US, I began to imagine how I could combine my passion for music with my love of adventure. The 'Camino de Santiago' actually refers to any of the pilgrim routes that follow ancient Roman roads and footpaths to Santiago de Compostela. Many beautiful churches line the paths, and I envisaged how these spaces would sound filled

with the music of Bach. During my studies at Juilliard I had started looking for a novel way to record the Six Cello Suites – a rite of passage for all cellists. As the Camino plan took shape, my recording team and I had the idea to go further and produce a documentary film about the route, featuring pilgrims' stories, the Cello Suites and my own journey. We set about raising funds through Kickstarter and through our fiscal sponsor, Fractured Atlas; Musilia provided one of the world's lightest and strongest carbon fibre cello cases; and Danish Professional Audio, Tascam, Genelec, Merging Technologies and Latch Lake provided the audio equipment we needed to record Bach's music and the sounds of the Camino.

ONE IMMEDIATE CHALLENGE at the planning stage was obtaining permission to record and film inside each of the 36 churches we had selected for their beauty, architectural interest and historical significance. Most of the priests we contacted were unwilling

to allow us to record and film, and perhaps rightly so, for we were offering nothing of benefit to their communities. We brainstormed ways to achieve our own recording goals and also give something back to the local people, and decided that each recording session should double as a free concert, an idea that won the approval of the priests.

I had the opportunity to share Bach's music with thousands of people

It was a fortuitous outcome, for rather than simply recording the Suites, I now had the opportunity to share Bach's music with thousands of people.

On 14 May my team and I assembled in Madrid, drove to Roncesvalles in the Pyrenees, and began our journey at the Iglesia Colegiata de Santa Maria, a Catholic temple with an adjoining monastery. Sitting before an expectant audience, I began with the first Bach Suite I ever learnt: the G major. As the



Starting out: the hills between Roncesvalles and Zabaldika.



The concert in Najera was well attended by locals and pilgrims

sound filled the church I was struck by the intimacy and purity of the acoustic and of the beauty of the space: the simple architecture, the ancient stone walls, the vivid stained glass windows. Most people in the audience were pilgrims beginning their own journeys, and I felt an overwhelming feeling of community. The following morning I took my first steps along the route, passing a sign that read: 'Santiago: 790'. That meant nearly 800 kilometres (500 miles) lay between me and the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, and a further 50 miles beyond that to the Atlantic Ocean – my final destination.

ON THE SECOND DAY I came to Zabaldika in the Esteribar Valley, a tiny village with a population of less than 40 people. Three nuns from the local convent hosted my concert, and almost everyone in the community came to the church that evening, plus many more from the nearby towns of Larrasoña and Pamplona. It was an honour to play in that little church whose weathered stones date back to the twelfth century, and I was struck by the audience's enthusiasm for Bach's music. In one particularly humbling exchange, one of the nuns told me I was 'carrying a treasure' and that the voice of my cello, and of Bach's music, would bring beauty

to my Camino experience and that of others.

'Simplicity in all things' became a key lesson of my Camino experience. On a material level I learnt about my real needs and the core items required to sustain me for six weeks: a change of clothes, sleeping bag, basic personal items, rain gear, cash, credit card and, of course, my cello. This existence revealed another truth: that the essentials in life are clean air, clean water, sufficient food, warmth and beauty. This philosophy has since shaped my approach to music and the cello, and 'simplicity in all things' is a mantra that can change any musician's technique and approach to phrasing. Perhaps it was in Bach's mind when he wrote his Cello Suites, where the harmony is composed melodically

and most of the counterpoint must be imagined by the listener. This seems particularly true of the Sarabande from the Suite no.5, in which Bach manages to communicate the most profound expression with the least amount of material. I had the opportunity to record this Sarabande in the cathedral of Los Arcos, which with its dark and sombre interior and richly decorated Gothic architecture, provided a starkly contrasting setting.

AT THE BEGINNING of my journey I had no concept of what it would mean, physically and emotionally, to walk 500 miles. Nor did I predict how profoundly the experience would change my relationship with Bach's music >



Castle ruins crumble on a hill overlooking the town of Castrojeriz

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▲ An outdoor concert at the portico of the cathedral in Astorga

— my interpretations, pacing and approach to phrasing. It was fascinating to discover the impact each church had on my performances: some were huge and required a particular kind of projection, generally slower tempos and longer breaths between phrases; other churches were so small and resonant that I had to temper the energy I put into my instrument to avoid saturating the space with sound. Other churches were perfect though, and in these I could play freely, without changing my sound or interpretation. One such church, the oldest on the route and also my favourite, was the church of Vilar de Donas. Originally constructed in the seventh century, it was converted by the Knights of Santiago in the twelfth century into a burial site and monastery, and bears examples of both Celtic and Christian artwork.

After 36 days of walking and 31 performances, on 21 June I arrived at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, ready to witness the

It was fascinating to discover the impact each church had on my performances

swinging of the Botafumeiro, the cathedral's famous thurible. Many pilgrims end their journey here, and that evening when I performed there I was amazed by the number of pilgrims who came to enjoy the music one last time. There was very little space left in the chapel as people squeezed in around me, crowding the aisles and spilling out

of the doorway. Looking out into the audience, I saw many familiar faces and afterwards my friend Peter, who had attended many of my concerts along the way, thanked me for the music and for providing a thread that held the pilgrim community together.

My father joined me in Santiago just hours before that concert, having flown in from Alaska, and the following day we set off to walk the final 50 miles to the Atlantic Ocean and a place called Fisterra. The final destination for pre-Christian pilgrims before the Way of St James was established, Fisterra was believed by ancient cartographers to be the furthest western point in Europe and the end of the earth.

The route beyond Santiago was rugged and more challenging than the previous 500 miles had been, with far fewer pilgrims on the trail. After my jubilant arrival in Santiago the walk to Fisterra provided a quiet and beautiful epilogue. At the end of three gruelling

days my father and I arrived at the Atlantic Ocean. The cliffs at Fisterra towered above the crashing waves below, and the sight of so much water after so many endless fields of wheat was awe-inspiring to behold. That night I played my final concert, on the cliffs surrounded by many happy pilgrims perched on the rocks around me.

We all experienced the same sense of being forever changed by the Camino. It is so rare in the race-pace of modern society that we have the opportunity to walk, think, breathe and live simply. The experience changed my life, both as a man and as a musician. The fullness of those changes will reveal itself in time. My task now is to integrate all that I learnt into my daily life and to live according to the truths I gathered along the way. ■

Dane Johansen's walking route and the full account of his journey can be read at www.walktofisterra.com



End of the journey: the Atlantic Ocean viewed from the cliffs at Fisterra



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Summit meeting

Mittenwald's seventh International Violin and Bow Making Competition attracted submissions from across the globe, although prizes in several categories were unforthcoming. **Rebecca Schmid** reports

SINCE THE 17TH CENTURY, the Alpine town of Mittenwald in south Germany has been synonymous with violin making. At the industry's height in the late 18th century there were 80 craftsmen actively working there, and in 1858 a violin making school was founded to provide a systematic education in the craft.

More than 150 years later, the State Vocational School for Musical Instrument Making has continued to expand and modernise its facilities, and draws students from around the world. Ateliers line the main streets, with violins hanging in most shop windows. And since 1989 the town of Mittenwald, together with the school, musical instrument museum and the support of local instrument makers, has held an international competition for violin, viola, cello and bow making. The 2014 edition of the contest, which is planned to take place every five years, ran from 7 to 14 June.

Two hundred instrument and bow makers from 30 countries submitted their work for consideration: a total of 222 instruments and 66 bows. Several were rejected as being against the contest's rules (for instance, no submission could include the maker's stamp) before an international jury headed by Stuttgart-based luthier Hieronymus Koestler took on the Herculean task of evaluating the remainder. According to Koestler, a Mittenwald-trained luthier himself, the jury's points system gave equal standing to playability and quality of construction – a decision that was reflected in the line-up of jurors, which included four professional string players.

THE INSTRUMENTS' PLAYABILITY proved to be rather a stumbling block in the cello division. On 14 June, members of the public were invited to attend a sound test at the making school's concert hall. Members of the jury performed on several

of the shortlisted instruments, identified only by submission number (the makers were revealed at the exhibition later that evening). Cellist Kerstin Feltz played the introduction to Elgar's Cello Concerto on four of the cellos – not one of which, she admitted, was particularly player-friendly. Fellow jurors Predrag Katanić and Arkadij Winokurov performed on a selection of shortlisted violas and violins respectively. Three of the violins produced a resonant tone and smooth transition between registers, although there was one that I thought possessed superior dynamic nuance and emotional depth.

The maker of this instrument, Paris-based luthier Philippe Mahu – a laureate of the local school – was one of only two participants to accept his prize in person, that of third place in the violin division, at the concert and awards ceremony that evening. At his side was Austrian native Alexander Schütz, who received two silver prizes for his violin and viola. The gold-prize winner of both these divisions was another Mittenwald alumnus, Marcus Klimke, whose viola outdid its competitors by a significant points margin.

In the cello category only one prize was bestowed: the silver, which went

to Bamberg-based maker Carsten Hoffmann. The lyrical cello and viola of Cremona-based Im Dong Pil, although both ranking third in their respective categories, did not receive prizes (a bronze prize for viola was not given). The star of the bow making competition was the Hungarian native Bernd Etzler, who topped the violin division and won silver in viola and cello. The bows of French-based Victor Bernard took gold for viola and bronze for cello. Other winners in that section hailed from Russia, the US, Germany and South Korea.

The evening included a concert performance with a programme selected to highlight the winning instruments' qualities. Afterwards the assembled crowd walked down the road to a local primary school, for the opening of a week-long exhibition of competing instruments. Many of the attendees wore traditional Bavarian lederhosen for the occasion, chatting over prosecco and peering inside the glass vitrines which revealed the names behind the creations. The sense of pride and community left no doubt that the seventh iteration of the competition had been a success, and upheld the traditions of care and craftsmanship still cherished by makers around the world. ■



The competing instruments on display at a local school



Ji-Yeon Lee, Bachelor of Music, Applied Music, Violin, '15

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Ears wide open

String students who struggle in the early stages of learning often don't know how to listen. Patiently help them to train their ears, says **Peter Quantrill**, and practice sessions will become ever more fulfilling

LEARNING TO PLAY AN INSTRUMENT

is learning to practise. And learning to practise is learning to listen.

My nine-year-old son has just passed his ABRSM Grade 1 cello exam. He has an excellent teacher at a state-funded London school, and he has the advantage (even if sometimes he doesn't see it that way) of also learning how to sing and play the piano. But his teachers can't be there when he does his daily practice, and neither can his parents all the time. When we are there, we wrestle with various impulses. Do we leave it up to him? Do we instruct him, in a quick and dirty way, to make the changes (longer bows, adjust fingering here, pay attention to dynamics there) that will bring a quick improvement? Or do we make the performance of practice more open-ended, and attempt to be a sounding board for what he's doing?

We all know, in personal and professional contexts, how depressing it can be to receive intervention from a higher authority only when a transgression or inadequacy has been detected. My efforts with my son's practice are directed towards a combination of those strategies outlined above, always motivated by the invitation to listen.

The conductor Claudio Abbado died in January this year, leaving a trail of monosyllabic interviews, recordings of ineffable beauty and the lasting affection of those musicians (especially young ones) who had worked with him. 'Many people learn how to talk,' Abbado once remarked in a rare moment of public candour, 'but they don't learn how to listen. Listening to one another is an important thing in life. And music tells us how to do that.'

Unless a student learns to listen, how can they improve? 'How was that?' I ask my son. 'It was OK.' 'Do you think you could have improved anything?' 'I don't know.' Enclosed here is a strategy of disconcertion, no doubt designed (whether consciously or not) to frustrate me and get me off his case.



And if a student does not care what they are doing, is there any answer to that?

INSPIRATION CAN BE SOUGHT

elsewhere, from listening to others make music. But concerts, in the standard classical format which I habitually attend, are not geared towards nine-year-olds. DVDs and books with CDs fill the shelves with well-meant intentions: here's a nice story about Beethoven and a funny picture – now listen to the Fifth

Tuning the ear might take more time now than it used to

Symphony. But reading and looking aren't listening. Multimedia content and performances have eroded our abilities to just listen, and the opportunities to do so become ever rarer. Discussing the futility of a private language, Ludwig Wittgenstein observed how no one can feel your pain, and listening is in the same position: no one can hear you listen.

Learning to listen is learning to care. Scales and arpeggios are the daily diet

of musicians great and lowly because it is comparatively easy to hear when they go well, and what to do when they don't. This tuning of the ear can take time and might take more time now than it used to, when listening was more of a habit. When learning an instrument, we'll always care more about getting right those pieces we're drawn to. 'Don't force it,' my father would say. He was referring to doors and hatches, bottles and lids, but the principle applies to music. I might want to listen to my son do Purcell's Hornpipe, but if he wants to play *March of the Stegosaurus* instead, then Purcell can wait.

For those who make it through the painful early stages – for students and maybe their parents too – there should be that magic moment when the door opens, and there, in front of you, is a wealth of music not just to learn but to love, and maybe for ever. (For me as a young cellist, that moment came with Bach.) That's when we start to correct our tuning, go over a vexing string-crossing time and again, not because our teacher told us to, or a parent is breathing down our neck, but because we feel the sense of responsibility towards a higher authority, the music itself. That's when we've begun to listen. ■

Ask the EXPERTS

How to deal with a problem pupil? Four teachers give their thoughts on helping an errant seven-year-old focus on her lessons

I am a novice violin teacher with a seven-year-old pupil who misbehaves in lessons and doesn't practise. She rolls on the floor in between instructions; she prods her baby brother with the bow; she takes the wire winding off her bow. Every 30-minute lesson includes this kind of behaviour, but she does also listen and play what's given. Her mother says she enjoys the lessons despite this, and it is true that she does seem to. I've cross-referenced teaching books and tried to structure the lessons imaginatively, but progress is slow. How can I bring more discipline into the lessons (I'm a softie) without putting her off? And should I persevere even though she doesn't practise?

SALLY KENDALL, MANCHESTER, UK



MIMI ZWIG

You are a very patient teacher and you probably sense that this seven-year-old is worth your

nurturing in the long run. In the short term, I can suggest the following:

- Write a simple contract with the student that describes the parameters of acceptable behaviour and outlines short-term goals
- The reward system works wonders: give her stickers, sweets, ice cream and so on when she behaves
- Have two shorter lessons (10 to 15 minutes) per week instead of a single longer lesson
- Make the lesson a mix of playing the violin, singing, interval

recognition, rhythm games, and listening to music

- Ask the parent not to attend the lesson, although you may want to video the lesson for the mother to view at home

Below are the tough suggestions to be used as a last resort:

- Terminate the lesson with the first offence, even if this is only a few minutes into the lesson
- Tell the mother to take the violin back to the shop, or place it out of reach until the child begs for it back
- Have you asked the mother to discipline her child?

Mimi Zweig is professor of violin at the Jacobs School of Music and director of the Indiana University String Academy in Bloomington, US



MARK BJORK

Since progress is being made and the student reportedly is enjoying the experience, I think

you can improve this situation. First, if at all possible, pair this student with another one, about the same age or a bit older, who is a fine example of good behaviour. Then have them watch each other's lessons. The problem student will see what is expected when you praise the other for good work and behaviour. This student will also be less likely to misbehave when watched by a peer.

Most importantly, don't respond to the bad behaviour. Say nothing and show nothing in your facial expressions – simply wait. The child will eventually notice that you are not responding. ▸

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You can then say something like, 'All right, are you ready to work?' For the student, receiving attention for bad behaviour can be a reward in itself: children often learn this manipulation early. The idea is to turn the situation around so that the child is rewarded only for good behaviour.

If all else fails, put down your instrument and walk out of the room – but say nothing to the child or to the parent. Stay out of the room for perhaps three to five minutes or until you hear nothing, then return. Offer no explanation (very important) to the child or parent but say again, 'Are you ready to work?' Final advice: never bargain with a student.

Mark Bjork is professor of violin and pedagogy at the University of Minnesota School of Music in Minneapolis, US



CAROLINE LUMSDEN

First, the positives. You have a pupil who is achieving and enjoys her

lessons, so you are doing all the right things.

I find that making the child the teacher, by giving them the freedom to choose the order of the lesson, helps a lot. Praise and encourage them at all times, and just ignore the bad behaviour. Change tack frequently, but have something that she can perform to her mother at the end of the lesson.

One student of mine insisted on pretending to be a dog on all fours throughout a term's beginner group sessions, and would only answer to the name of her favourite Disney princess. Her mother sat in on these lessons and despaired, but she told me the child didn't stop playing her violin at home. A term later I took her for ten minutes

a week, initially without her mother, and I found she was really bright musically and ready to go. We still had discipline issues and I employed all of the above tactics.

A year later, the same six-year-old has passed her first exam with distinction, playing one of her own compositions as well. Her behaviour has improved dramatically and she is playing in a string ensemble, still with a little cheekiness which I love because I now know that she will go far.

If you can reconcile your pupil's cheekiness with her diligence you will succeed, and once you have got your pupil on side, you can gradually give each lesson a structured framework that includes sightreading duets, singing and playing, fun scales, and improvisation and composition – a great way to learn theory. I admire your tenacity.

Caroline Lumsden divides her time teacher training, creating new editions and starting new music centres for 3–18-year-olds based on her Musicland Approach.



MIKE NELSON

You seem to have made good progress with this child, and as long as she is enjoying the lessons,

don't worry too much about her not practising – in my experience, children of this age rarely practise effectively. I am sure that the misbehaviour will disappear in time, especially if you can capture her attention by finding music that she really wants to play.

I find that playing duets together, which can be treated as a reward at the end of the lesson, greatly increases motivation. It is good to see that you already try to choose pieces to suit her.

Try cutting the lessons down to 20 minutes – ideal for the average seven-year-old. Fill them with non-stop action. Could her mother

perhaps leave the baby with someone for the duration of the lesson? You might find that these steps help the diligence factor and consequently lift your confidence. Each lesson

Praise and encourage them at all times, and just ignore the bad behaviour

CAROLINE LUMSDEN

should include encouragement and positive verbal rewards for things that have improved.

I have always tried to imagine my pupils continuing to play when they are adults. So many players who are not professional musicians gain relaxation and joy from playing quartets and in amateur orchestras. Sometimes it helps to remember that children will grow up and almost inevitably improve. If something is wrong, avoid saying 'no' but work at the problem with the pupil until it starts to improve, and make sure the pupil knows that the improvement is because of well-thought-out practice. Exams should be treated as a tool rather than as the whole basis of learning – I would rather see them used as a confidence-builder (with a good mark), or as a practice-builder for teenagers (who need to work). Outside factors such as a baby sibling can make the lessons difficult for the teacher – don't take the blame for what is beyond your control. ■

Mike Nelson has been a regular strand leader on the Stringwise workshops in London, UK, and is joint musical director of the Pharos Guild summer music course

LEARNING FROM THE MASTERS

Insightful, inspirational, insistent on good practice – string teachers must embody myriad qualities to help their students become the best they can be. Some of today's top players and pedagogues recall their time working with their most influential tutors

AT SOME POINT IN THEIR CAREER, MOST professional musicians will end up teaching in some capacity. It could be in talking students through a piece of repertoire in a masterclass; giving a demonstration on their instrument to a group of schoolchildren; running a string course at a summer retreat; or tutoring hundreds of talented students over a 40-year career at a conservatoire. And for the students, any one of those tutors and experiences could prove to be the catalyst that inspires them to become the greatest player – or teacher – that they can possibly be.

So, what are the qualities that make up a great string teacher – attention to detail, encyclopaedic knowledge of repertoire, or insistence on two hours' scale practice a day? It would be almost impossible to make a list that helps all students equally, but looking through the reminiscences of string players over the next few pages, there appear to be some common threads. Every teacher seems to have had high expectations of all their students, and made no secret of their feelings when they thought a pupil's playing wasn't up to scratch. All of them were accessible – even though they might have been strict, they conveyed an enthusiasm for passing on their knowledge. And finally, each one cared deeply, both about their instrument and their duty to their students – and were able to communicate that enthusiasm and motivation to the next generation.

MARCO BORGREVE



DAVID TAKENO

CAROLIN WIDMANN, now a soloist and chamber and orchestral musician, reflects on her time studying with Takeno as a masters student and fellow at the Guildhall School from 2000 to 2003

YOU CAN SUM UP DAVID'S TEACHING STYLE with one word, written in huge letters above his room at the Guildhall: 'heuristic.' He helps students become their own teachers. When I played a piece for him, he would say, 'How does this feel? Do you think you have the right mood?' Instead of telling me what was wrong, he made me find out for myself. He trusts his students to use their brains, which is something I always try to do in my own teaching.

He is a really good psychologist: he always knows what a student needs. I went to him after learning with a strict teacher, Michèle Auclair, for whom I practised day and night. In her lessons, even one wrong note would make me feel self-conscious. In my first months with David, he just let me play: the Brahms Concerto, the Paganini Caprices. He never said much, and I thought, 'Come on, was that a lesson?' But he knew that all I needed was to relax and gain confidence. He asked, 'What do you want to play? What do you think would be good for you?', gently steering me without me even realising it was happening. I started thinking for myself. What would I criticise if I were him? After a few months, when I felt comfortable, he started showing me that my horizons could be expanded in every direction.

Once we spent a whole lesson on the opening phrase of the Strauss Sonata. He felt it could go five notches up if we practised everything slowly, with clear musical intentions and all technical parameters under control: bow distribution, shifts, string-crossings, dynamics. We tried things out, like on a playground – he has a childlike quality of curiosity. When I was learning a piece where I had to sing while playing chords,



ANITA CORBIN

David Takeno at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in 1986

BORN 1947
AGE 67
NATIONALITY
 Japanese
INSTRUMENT
 Violin
TAUGHT Menuhin School; Cambridge University; Guildhall School of Music, UK
PUPILS INCLUDE
 Anthony Marwood, Rachel Podger, Pavlo Beznosiuk

Negative words are not a part of David's vocabulary

he bought some huge yellow headphones – the sort used by construction workers to block out noise – and we practised using those, so that I could tune my voice while I was playing. After three days, I felt completely secure in my tuning. He goes to extremes to help his students find solutions. I think of his way of teaching, and of the things he said, almost every day when I play.

He never gave me scales or studies, but once I said to a younger student, 'Is he doing scales with you?' and she said, 'Hell yes: eight hours a day!' He teaches everybody differently, but negative words are not a part of his vocabulary. He always looks at what students can

do, and what their potential is. We were never allowed to listen to each other in lessons, when we were in a vulnerable state and talked about weaknesses and fears that are nobody else's business. We only played to each other when we were ready for the stage.

Ten years after studying with David, I still talk to other ex-students about evenings spent at his house playing chamber music, cooking and eating together. He teaches you to enjoy life both for itself and for music. He's so unconventional: the way he lives, the way he goes for an hour-long run in the morning before arriving at school at seven, jumping around and getting things organised. He has boundless energy and passion for music. Once he drove all night to see me at a concert at 11am, after seeing another ex-student do a concert in Sweden the night before. By the time I could say, 'Thank you!' he had already gone. ▶



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Jorja Fleezanis, *Violin, Orchestral Studies*
Mauricio Fuks, *Violin*

Simin Ganatra, *Violin, Pacifica Quartet*
Edward Gazouleas, *Viola*
Grigory Kalinovsky, *Violin*
Mark Kaplan, *Violin*
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Kevork Mardirossian, *Violin*
Kurt Muroki, *Double Bass*
Stanley Ritchie, *Violin*
Masumi Per Rostad, *Viola, Pacifica Quartet*
Peter Stumpf, *Violoncello*
Joseph Swensen, *Violin*
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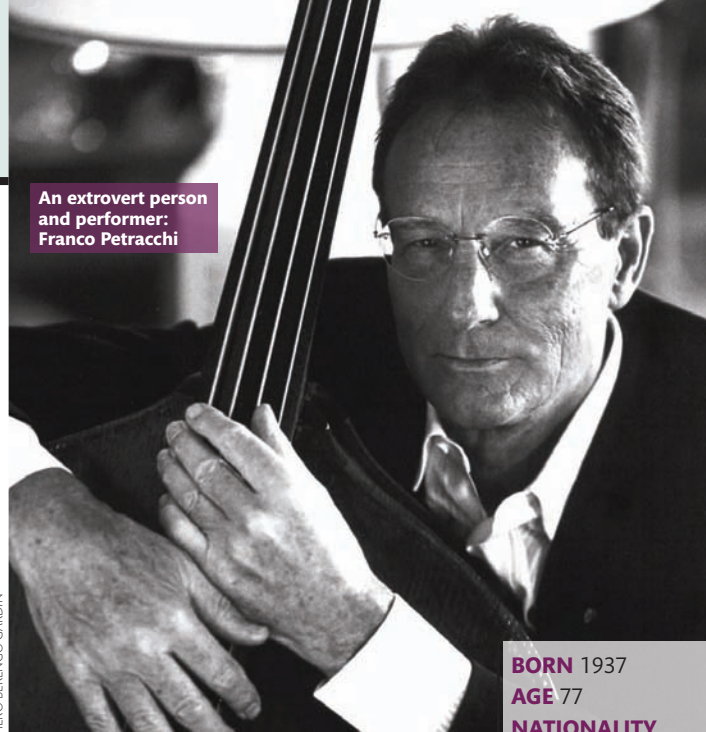
FRANCO PETRACCHI

UK double bassist CHI-CHI NWANOKU recalls her time studying with the Italian soloist and pedagogue between 1981 and 1983

FRANCO PETRACCHI was one of the players who raised the standard of double bass playing and teaching in the 1970s and 1980s. At the time, at least in the UK, it was assumed that young bassists would end up playing in orchestras, and becoming a soloist was almost unheard of. When I was studying at London's Royal Academy of Music we were taught never to draw unnecessary attention to the bass section, and woe betide any mention of solo repertoire. In 1981 I went on a summer course at Sermoneta, near Rome, to learn about the area of my instrument I knew little about, mostly solo playing, and there I met Petracchi. He was developing his study book *Simplified Higher Technique*, which has now become a standard text for double bassists, and he worked on the exercises every morning with the whole bass class. The detail in his method is simple and logical, with studies that develop independence and strength in the fingers of the left hand, as well as creative bow studies that hone the finer points of bow technique. I still use them today, and have made a few adaptations to increase coordination and speed.

For me, Petracchi personified inspiration. He is a very extrovert person and performer, expressing himself through gestures that translate into a vivid and virtuosic storytelling manner of playing. These characteristics were evident in his teaching: even though he didn't have particularly good English, I always knew what he wanted to say through his gestures and commanding playing. It was a huge cultural difference compared with my tuition in England, where the playing style was more static and almost entirely focused on the low orchestral end of the bass range. Petracchi's fingers effortlessly danced all over his bass, producing a melodic line in a lyrical, melodious way like a bel canto opera singer. He drew that expressive capacity out in my playing.

When he first heard me play, he said: '*Tecnica*: terrible. *Musica*: very good.' He was never afraid to give negative feedback, which made me want to succeed even more. I also attended masterclasses at the Accademia Chigiana



An extrovert person and performer:
Franco Petracchi

PIERO BERENGO GARDIN

BORN 1937
AGE 77
NATIONALITY

Italian

INSTRUMENT

Double bass

TAUGHT

Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Rome

PUPILS INCLUDE

Thomas Braendstrup, Christine Hoock, Joel Quarrington

music academy in Siena, and I remember there was sometimes blood running down my fingerboard. To begin with, there was no callus on my thumb as his other students had, but it soon developed. Those students already had a much more advanced left-hand technique, and during one group lesson Petracchi called me a '*dilettante*' in front of the rest of the class. When he saw that I didn't understand, he asked the Italian speakers to translate the word for him but no one volunteered. It turned out that the word he was looking for was 'amateur'. People were shocked that he was so brutal, but I knew that my technique was still primitive compared with the others. Maybe he didn't quite know how to handle me because I was such a feisty character: succeeding with him meant a lot to me and I was constantly frustrated with myself.

I was one of the guinea pigs for the exercises he created. He taught me how to be lyrical with the bow, and showed me that there was never just one way of doing something, that the dots on the page could be treated as guidelines. He gave me studies by Billè and Mengoli, which had my left hand running up and down the fingerboard at speed, training my muscle memory and giving me much more confidence in virtuosic repertoire, giving me a greater feeling of freedom in my playing.



ANTONIO JANIGRO

Swiss cellist and composer

THOMAS DEMENGA recalls how Antonio Janigro, his tutor from 1974–76, taught him to find his own technique

I LEARNT MORE FROM ANTONIO JANIGRO than from any other teacher I ever had. I began studying with him in Stuttgart aged 20, by which time I'd had a firm grounding in technique from Walter Grimmer, a pupil of Maurice Gendron. Janigro gave me the tools

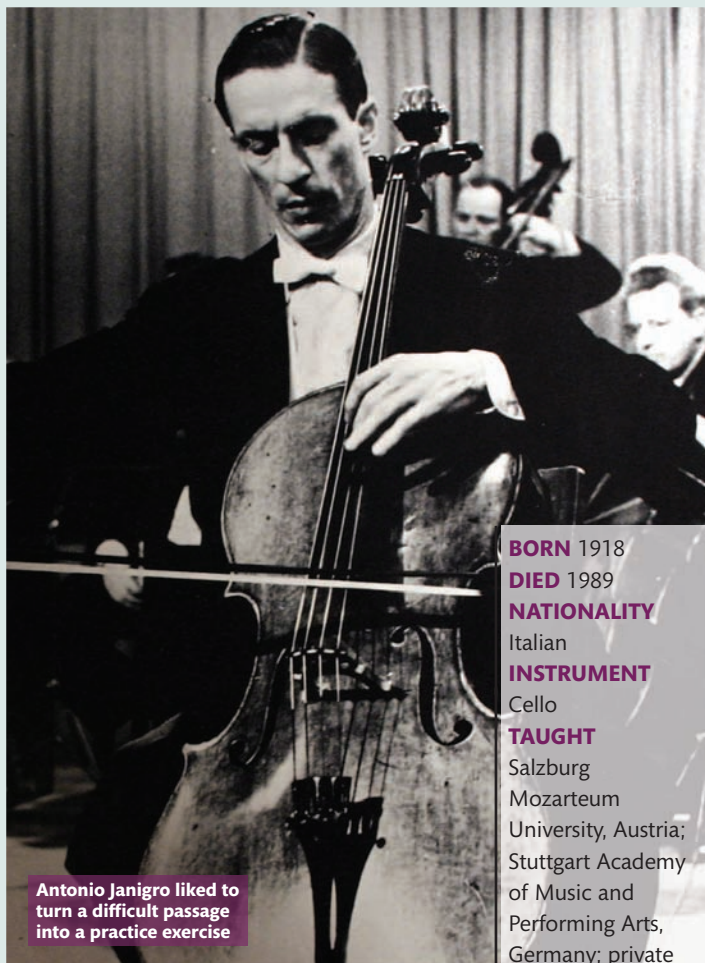
to go beyond that and find my own technique: he gave me a foundation on which to build, by pointing out problems and guiding me to the solutions. He would say, 'If you don't relax this muscle, you'll never be able to play that section properly,' and made sure I understood the problem before moving on.

His normal method of teaching was to focus on repertoire rather than scales and studies. He didn't separate out the technical problems: he would demonstrate certain fingerings, for example, and explain the musical idea that they were based on. It wouldn't >

necessarily be the safest or the most obvious fingering, but he showed how it captured the expressiveness he wanted. He expected me to practise scales as well, of course, and sometimes produced a study for me to practise for a week, which he thought might help with a problem he'd detected. But he preferred to turn a difficult passage into a practice exercise: in his opinion, practising a study wouldn't normally get to the root of a problem.

He had a very good eye for subtle movements and details that might indicate tension in the bowing arm. First of all, he would demonstrate it himself to explain what he meant – for instance, it's quite common for a player's little finger to hold on to the frog too hard, which can make the whole arm stiff and rigid up to the shoulder. He would show me how to relax the finger, and to keep it relaxed at all times. He was also a great left-hand technician: he had studied with the Armenian cellist Diran Alexanian, who had taught Piatigorsky, Feuermann and Fournier among others, and who was known for his left-hand technique. Both he and Alexanian insisted that fingering should be completely clean and there should be minimal shifting. As I was used to Maurice Gendron's technique – which was also good – it took me almost a year to get used to Janigro's fingerings. It involved lots of stretching with the fourth finger instead of sliding on to the second finger, almost like piano technique. Shifting was to be used only when it was necessary to express something. Not many other cellists take this approach.

Janigro didn't play with huge sound, but he had an elegant bow technique and there was always a good deal of colour and subtlety in his tone. Unlike a soloist

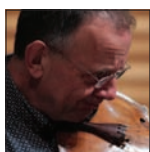


Antonio Janigro liked to turn a difficult passage into a practice exercise

such as Rostropovich, who played with lots of pressure and vibrato, Janigro had a more internal manner of playing. He encouraged variation in vibrato, and in the contact point of the bow in relation to the bridge.

BORN 1918
DIED 1989
NATIONALITY
 Italian
INSTRUMENT
 Cello
TAUGHT
 Salzburg
 Mozarteum
 University, Austria;
 Stuttgart Academy
 of Music and
 Performing Arts,
 Germany; private
 tuition
PUPILS INCLUDE
 Antonio Meneses,
 Giovanni Sollima,
 Mario Brunello

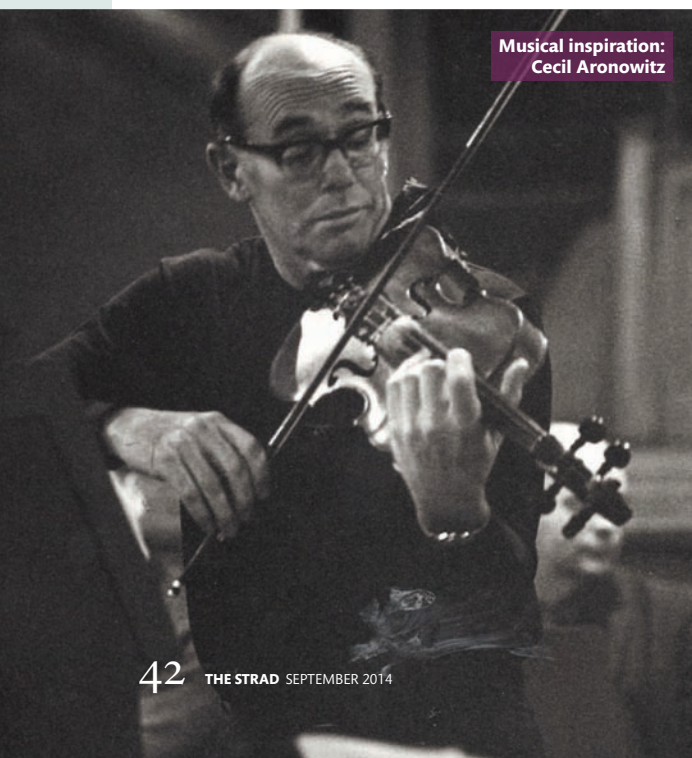
KEVIN LATAK



CECIL ARONOWITZ

SIMON ROWLAND-JONES, founding violist of the UK's Chilingirian Quartet, studied with the viola pedagogue at the Royal College of Music from 1967–70

Musical inspiration:
Cecil Aronowitz



HANS WILD

CECIL ARONOWITZ had an idiosyncratic way of playing the viola, so basic technique was not something he wanted to pass on to his students. What he felt he could pass on was musical inspiration, which he supplied in great quantities.

Cecil never worked on studies or scales with me. I had already spent three years at the Yehudi Menuhin School and had received a strong technical grounding from Patrick Ireland, and also from Yehudi Menuhin himself, who taught us a lot in the early days. I suppose that Cecil saw this and decided my basic way of playing was not something he wanted to change too much. But he felt that I needed to express myself better, and he was right. He never suggested anything like a warm-up routine: it seemed he was always warmed up! It's an important skill, to be able to pick up your instrument and give it your all from the outset. After studying with Cecil, I spent a year in Rome with another great teacher, Bruno Giuranna, and that was very different: I practised scales and studies for hours every day. Bruno wanted to know that I'd learnt two new studies each week, even if he didn't hear them. >

BORN 1916
DIED 1978
NATIONALITY
 South African–
 British
INSTRUMENT Viola
TAUGHT Royal
 College of
 Music, London;
 Royal Northern
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 Manchester, UK
PUPILS INCLUDE
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Monika Henschel, Viola
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He did a lot of demonstrating and very little talking: I played, he played, I played, and so on.

He would express a few notes, or articulate certain phrases, so clearly that you could find your own way to recreate what he was doing. His connection between the bow and the string was extraordinary: he supported the instrument from the left hand so that the bow never pressed into the string, always balancing it with his very expressive bow arm, producing the most phenomenal cantabile and range of expression.

His energy was boundless. Once, when I was playing the second movement of the Brahms E flat Sonata, he wanted a phrase to take off more, so he said, 'Just put your bow on the string and go *wah!*', with his eyes on fire and his whole body alive. Often he would dance around the room, and at the end of every lesson he always sent his students to the canteen to get him another cup of tea with six, seven, or eight teaspoons of sugar. In those days you could still smoke inside, so he did –

incessantly, sometimes with more than one cigarette burning at once. He sang a lot too, beautifully: it was an instant way of showing you the shape of a phrase without having to pick up his viola and put down a cigarette.

Cecil did a lot of demonstrating and very little talking

He was the most wonderful, generous, sunny person to be with. He made you see the music in such a way that you could enjoy and understand the spirit of it. If a teacher can offer something as strong and as clear as that to you, then I think the best thing is to absorb it wholeheartedly. You will get other ideas from other teachers and musicians – and from yourself, of course – and then gradually you will arrive at your own way of making music.



LEONARD ROSE

SELMA GOKCEN, cello pedagogue at London's Guildhall School of Music & Drama, recalls the nine years between 1972 and 1983 that she spent studying with the great US cellist

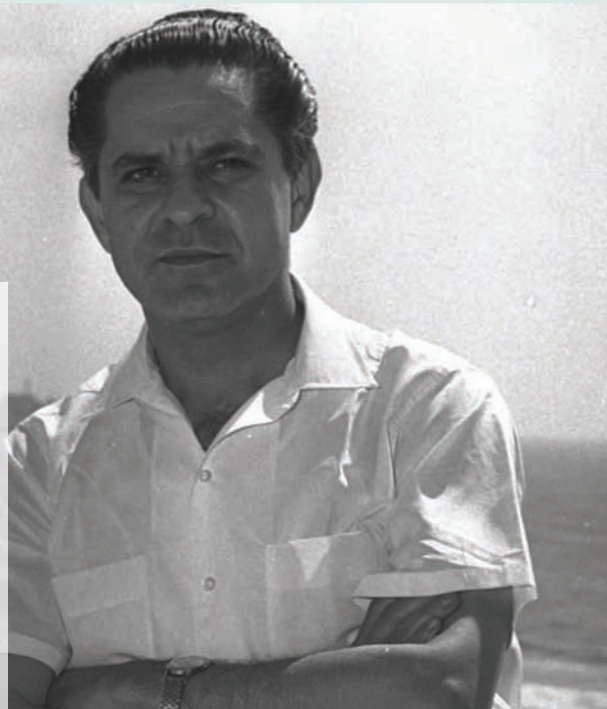
FOR ME, THERE ARE THREE HALLMARKS of a great teacher: that they can analyse and understand a problem; that they can recognise such a problem in a student's playing; and that they can accurately express the solution through their use of language and demonstration. Leonard Rose had all of these qualities. He could find the right words to describe an action, and knew exactly how to help students to overcome their problems.

He was a colleague of Ivan Galamian, who had a method for teaching every aspect of the violin. He had watched Galamian teach and, similarly, he formulated a set of principles that would lead to mastery of the instrument. The most important thing I learnt in the first six months studying with him was projection: how the string resonates, how to make the sound consistent throughout the bow stroke, and how to produce a note that immediately speaks. In particular, he would demonstrate the *collé* stroke by beginning with the bow resting motionless on the string. He showed how to initiate the stroke – how the fingers took hold of the string and opened, how they closed, and the timing of the thumb and fingers during the up bow and down bow. We put all this into practice using the Popper Etude no.6, and I had marked in my notebook twelve ways to practise it, all with different bowing patterns. Effectively I had to relearn my bow technique within those six months, but at the end my sound was completely transformed.

Leonard Rose always knew the right words to describe an action

BORN 1918
DIED 1984
NATIONALITY
American
INSTRUMENT
Cello
TAUGHT
Juilliard School,
New York, US
PUPILS INCLUDE
Yo-Yo Ma, Lynn
Harrell, Matt
Haimovitz

ISRAEL GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE



For Mr Rose, playing the cello was a deeply serious matter. He expected his students to take it as seriously as he did. In lessons you could sense his focus and concentration through the gravity of his voice. He wasn't an effusive man by nature and his praise was always measured – perhaps he thought too much praise could go to a student's head. There was only one time I remember him angry: he had very specific ideas about the correct fingering for any piece, and I made a suggestion that conflicted with his ideas. His voice went down to a whisper, his body went very still, and as he quietly said why his fingering worked, I knew I'd overstepped the mark. His own tutor, Felix Salmond, ▸

was known to be ferocious, and Mr Rose said he never wanted to behave like that to his students.

Mr Rose placed great importance on balance: of the body, of the bow and of the hand. He emphasised the importance of good posture before it was fashionable. For the most part he'd want to hear repertoire. He'd mostly pay attention to your fingerings and bowings, and if the use of the bow revealed the phrasing. He had distinct ideas about a piece: when I was working on Bloch's *Schelomo* he would point

out that the theme in the second part was something that Bloch had heard his grandfather whistling in the outhouse. I felt that he identified with that piece more than any other work he played, or that I played for him.

If I had to summon up the most precious element of his teaching, it would be that he awakened me to the beauty and colour of the sound world of the cello. Mr Rose spent a lifetime searching for this beauty of sound, and he passed on the importance of this search through his teaching.

DALE WILCOX PHOTO



DOROTHY DELAY

Canada-based violinist and conductor
PETER OUNDJIAN studied with DeLay at Juilliard from 1979 to 1981 – a time that shaped his approach to music for life

FOR ME, THERE WERE TWO THINGS that were extraordinary about Miss DeLay. The first is that she was a brilliant psychologist. Once, when a good friend of mine had just done a recital, she said to him, 'Sweetie, Sugarplum, do have a tape of your recital?' He did, so she asked him to play it back to her, starting with Chausson's *Poème*. After about four seconds, she said, 'Did you hear that B flat, Sweetheart? That was the last note you played in tune.' This person is a huge jokester and a great violinist, so Miss DeLay knew that this was the best way to get the point across to him that he had to listen more carefully to every note he played. She was uncannily aware of what she could say to whom – she would never have misread anybody.

The second amazing quality was that she never tried to teach you ten things at once: she would decide that a lesson was going to be about one thing, whether how to practise a difficult series of runs, how to listen, or how to pace the music and build drama. People don't often talk about her intellectual side, but she had a great

At the end of a lesson I always felt I had advanced

grasp of the way form affects how you build musical tension – she taught me to engage in the dramatic journey of the music with absolute conviction. Most of us teach whatever comes into our minds next – tone colour here, phrasing there – but hers was a much more organised type of teaching. She would listen to you play, then make a decision. I'm not suggesting for a moment that she would talk about string-crossing for an hour – she would make other references too. But at the end of a lesson I always felt I had advanced in a particular way: I knew what the focus had been and I knew what to practise before your next lesson. That is something I have taken into my own teaching: when someone plays to me for the first time, I listen for five



CHARLES ABBOTT/ASPEN MUSIC FESTIVAL

Dorothy DeLay always knew what she could say to whom

or ten minutes before saying what needs work. She helped me to figure out how to get beneath a problem, and how to teach something in a way that will help students in many different situations. If I notice that somebody is having issues with spiccato, for example, and that they're struggling to play delicately at the frog, I start to look at the bigger picture: posture, the way they hold their right shoulder, the angle of the violin, the balance of their left hand. She taught me to think about what might be causing a series of problems.

Miss DeLay was extraordinarily warm, and highly intelligent and focused, with a unique approach towards supporting people's careers. She helped a lot of my colleagues to find their managers. You went into her room and there was something in the air: a sense of expectation. She was a mother figure who was extremely accomplished and expected all of her children – her pupils – to be equally so. ■

INTERVIEWS BY PAULINE HARDING AND CHRISTIAN LLOYD

BORN 1917
DIED 2002
NATIONALITY
American
INSTRUMENT
Violin
TAUGHT Juilliard School; University of Cincinnati; New England Conservatory; Meadowmount School of Music, US
PUPILS INCLUDE
Nigel Kennedy, Itzhak Perlman, Gil Shaham



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CIM Musicians perform at Severance Hall, home of The Cleveland Orchestra (Photo: Roger Mastroianni, 2013).

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MIRACLE ON THE MOUNTAIN

Can a two-week practice retreat transform your playing? **ARIANE TODES** travels to New York's Magic Mountain Music Farm to find out

THEY SAY THAT YOUTH IS WASTED ON THE young. I'd go further: studying is wasted on students. It certainly was in my case, when I took the postgraduate violin course at London's Royal Academy of Music 20 years ago. Back then, I had all the time in the world, attention from teachers and no mortgage – but no real idea how to learn. These days I understand more, and I long for the luxury of having no purpose other than to focus on my instrument and the language it speaks.

And so the two-week Magic Mountain Music Farm Practice Marathon Retreat seemed like the ideal place for me. It's one of the courses offered by Manhattan School of Music professor Burton Kaplan, who started running workshops nearly 30 years ago, in an old house in upstate New York. Over those years, the house has grown and evolved into a haven for up to twelve instrumentalists (mainly string players) to come and reset themselves musically under Kaplan's watchful eye.

Starting from New York City's Penn Station, I took a mesmerising five-and-a-half-hour coach ride through the verdant Catskills, feeling excitement but a tinge of apprehension. There needn't have been any of that though. Kaplan manages to create an atmosphere of trust, understanding and positivity so that everyone feels included, whatever their experience. And there was a wide variety of that among the twelve of us – amateur, teaching, orchestral, freelance and student – each of us with our own specific goals, needs and reasons for being there.

DANIEL PALSHERO

EVERY DAY AT THE FARM follows a similar structure, starting with helping oneself to breakfast. The kitchen and basement store enough food to live through Armageddon and everyone participates in cooking and cleaning, except for a few nights when a chef comes in. A giant folder in the kitchen lists duties and recipes, as well as individual lesson times – everyone has

three a week. Practice can start at 8am and must finish by 11pm and there are group classes at 11am and 8.30pm each day. Apart from that, one's time is one's own, and one is free to practise or loiter in the well-stocked pedagogical library, or even leave the building (which I did twice).

The structure offers many parallel learning mechanisms. The classes are fascinating – nominally they are about practice techniques (Kaplan uses his own *Practicing for Artistic Success* book as a basis) or musical language. In reality, they veer all over the place in response to individual needs or questions, and Kaplan's own freestyle autodidactic journey with specific subjects. His sense of curiosity about the world, whether about

Burton Kaplan's sense of curiosity about the world often acts as a route into an important musical concept

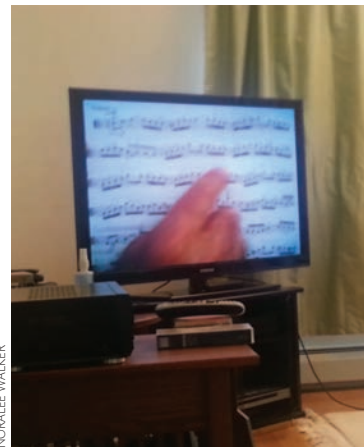
technology, science, literature, poetry, art or gestalt psychology, often acts as a route into some important musical concept or practice technique.

We take turns playing in class, which intensifies the learning: being a guinea pig in an exercise certainly focuses the mind, and all is captured on video for us to review. Watching colleagues explore the exercises is just as valuable, trying to tune into subtle changes in phrasing or sound as each player responds to Kaplan's input. In this way it's also a lesson in pedagogy – Kaplan's style is to encourage students to find their own path and solution, rather than telling them something is wrong. As he laments, 'A teacher will say, "Did you hear how the tone in bar three didn't match the music?" You say "uh-huh", but you don't even think. You didn't hear it. They're trying to impart a value system, but it doesn't work. That's why it takes so long for people to learn things. It's your perception that matters, not the teacher's.'

THEN THERE'S THE WORK one does in the privacy of one's room. I was worried about still being able to focus in the ways required – technology addiction has destroyed my attention span. But Kaplan's techniques turn practice into a musical experience and somehow this unlocked a relish that I don't remember having as a student. It also helps to know that everyone else is working hard (and that Kaplan is probably wandering around the house listening to our labours).

Lessons happen in Kaplan's study, which is crowded with scores, books on musical and scientific theories, and some of his own inventions (he's created a shoulder rest and once invented a device that rings a bell when a student's wrist collapses out). Here the teaching becomes much more focused – pieces are studied forensically bar by bar, technique corrected, feedback and encouragement given, Galamian fingerings disseminated.

Another more indirect learning mechanism is through the conversations that take place throughout the day – whether speaking with other participants about their musical lives and aspirations, or hearing Kaplan talking about some philosophical concept or cultural insight from his place at the head of the dinner table. >



NORALEE WALKER



▲ Students take turns playing in class, which intensifies the learning experience

▼ Kaplan gives each participant three individual lessons a week

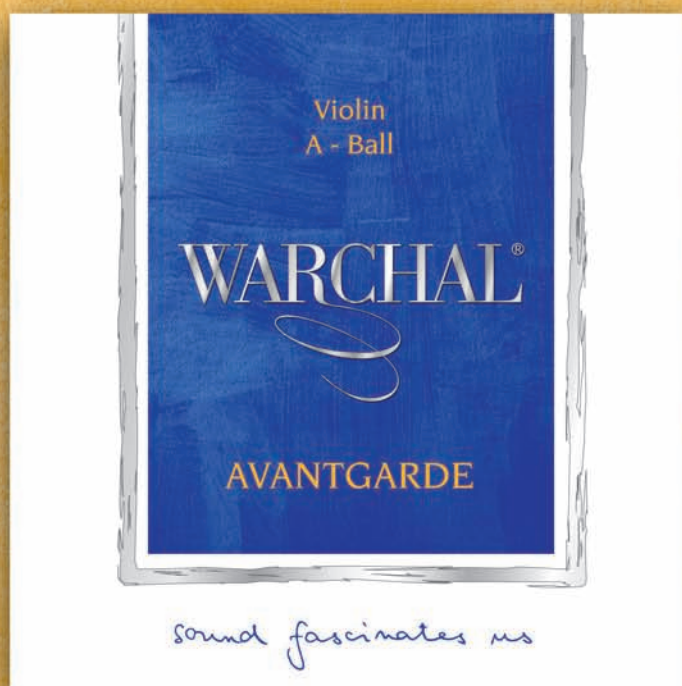


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NORALEE WALKER

▲▲ Lending a hand in the kitchen

▲ Comparing notes from the day's practice sessions over dinner

So the learning curve is continuous and steep throughout the two weeks, but for me it also contained sharp spikes with specific revelations. The first of these was as Kaplan took us through one of his practice methods in class – the ‘Technique of Observation’. I had brought a recently started Wieniawski etude-caprice and played the first page quite badly in class, I felt. I was focusing on the problems that I knew were coming up, which that I hadn’t practised enough, and the bad intonation.

This is where Kaplan’s ‘Pie Strategy’ comes in. There are four qualities to observe – intonation, rhythm, tone and expression. Rather than being critical about specific bars or phrases, one must play a whole passage while looking for the strongest and the weakest of these ‘pieces of the pie’. To make sure one is

Kaplan’s style is to encourage students to find their own path and solution

prepared for this observation, before playing one says out loud, ‘I’m going to play from bar x to bar y, looking for the strongest and the weakest slices of the pie.’ Afterwards one immediately states the strongest and then the weakest element. It took me a few goes to get used to the process, and it felt deeply uncomfortable having to talk out loud, but it turned some switch in my brain. Rather than focusing in a negative way on what was bad or what might go wrong, one is forced to step back and observe the whole. And miraculously, things start to go right. This is the fascinating alchemy Kaplan shows us – focus on the right hand and a left-hand problem sorts itself out;



Burton Kaplan (second from right) with the 2014 Magic Mountain participants

think about rhythm and a shift becomes easy. Improving one’s playing becomes more about psychology and paradox than sheer force of will.

Something about this feels subversive. My memories of lessons with many different teachers are of focusing on intonation and accuracy, so that it’s hard to draw back and let things be. Throughout the pie exercise, many of us instinctively say that intonation is the weakest, a fault of our training, as Kaplan says: ‘This is a fussy spot. It’s sad that people take this fussy quality and impose it on intonation. You should listen for, “Do I want to hear the rest of the story?”’ He sometimes steps in to point out that the problem is rhythm, at which a refocus improves the whole. It’s also telling that most of us automatically state the weakest slice of the pie first, so hard-wired are we to focus on problems rather than our positive impressions: another reason why this is such a useful exercise.

IF THE PROCESS SOUNDS a little esoteric, the body of Kaplan’s practice techniques is anything but. In classes we covered time-management strategies that you might find in a business manual, with plans, structures and milestones. At the other end of the scale, in one of my lessons Kaplan took me through the ‘Super Learning’ strategy for pounding through difficult passages. At the beginning of the lesson I confessed that with fast pieces like the Wieniawski I expected myself to fail, but with unerring patience Kaplan showed me how to work on tidying it up, using rhythms and a metronome. This was not particularly original in itself, but the specifics were more detailed and systematic than those I’d covered in the past, and the emphasis was on maintaining the musical content and sound, and a constant bow, even under tempo. After a couple of days of doing this on my own, my fingers were zinging away on the fingerboard, and with Kaplan’s encouragement I’ve now banished my self-perception that I can’t play fast.

As time went by, Kaplan dwelt on more sophisticated musical concepts in class, such as the metric skeleton – how the beats of a 4/4 bar have a certain hierarchy, which creates a flow through the bar and a sense of direction in music. We watched how when one student becomes conscious of this skeleton in a phrase, a shift >

ESTHER PLATT

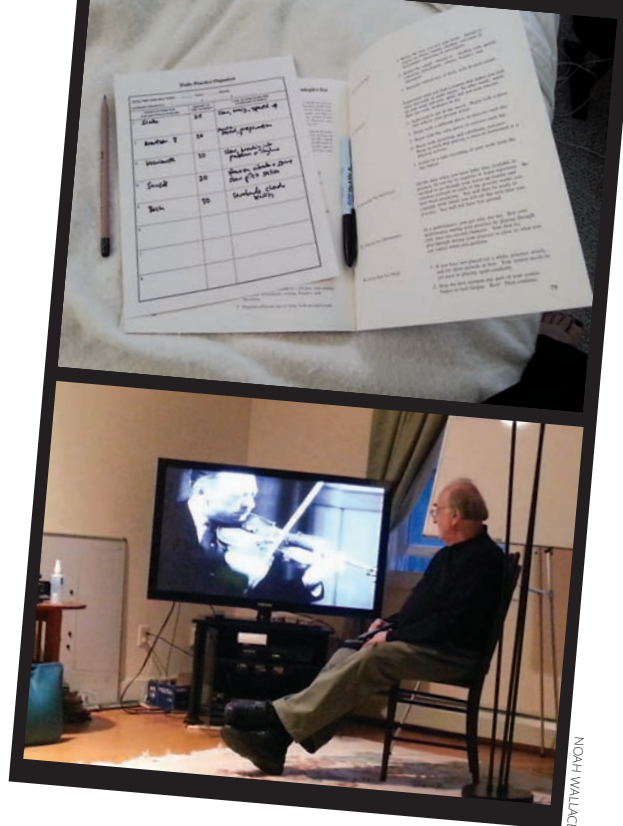
The learning curve is continuous and steep throughout the two weeks

that has been problematic suddenly comes right. We discussed closure – how to set up the end of a piece – and Kaplan took us through the grammar of music, and how to understand phrases, sub-phrases and musical words. I took all this to the practice room to work on the Sarabande and Gigue of the Bach D minor Partita, excited by the endless possibilities it offered and the joy of picking apart the logic of Bach's musical language.

It wasn't all work, though. I'd hardly expected to watch a documentary on my childhood heroes, the skaters Torvill and Dean, but Kaplan showed it to us as an example of true ensemble. Another evening we watched a documentary on the conductor Carlos Kleiber, whose work I'd barely registered before, to understand the way he created images for the players he was conducting, and how he set up the musical structure. We also watched the infamous Heifetz video where he imitates a bad auditionee, and listened to Jordi Savall's early music group Hespèrion XXI playing follies, precipitating a conversation about authenticity and the evolution of performance skill.

ALL THESE INPUTS were leading up to the final Sunday, when we were each to perform for ten minutes. Beforehand we had to set up our performance goals: 'conscious expectations that are possible and reasonable, to give us the greatest possibility of doing our best'. Kaplan encouraged us away from technical goals, though, citing research: 'They've measured the consequences of goals of different types, and if you're a musician and you decide to play technically better, you'll play worse.'

At class the night before, I had been tense playing the Bach Gigue and I had been struggling with the first chord of the Sarabande. For the latter, Kaplan's advice that 'a down bow starts with an up bow' helped. He also suggested that, rather than fixating on the beginning of the piece in the seconds before



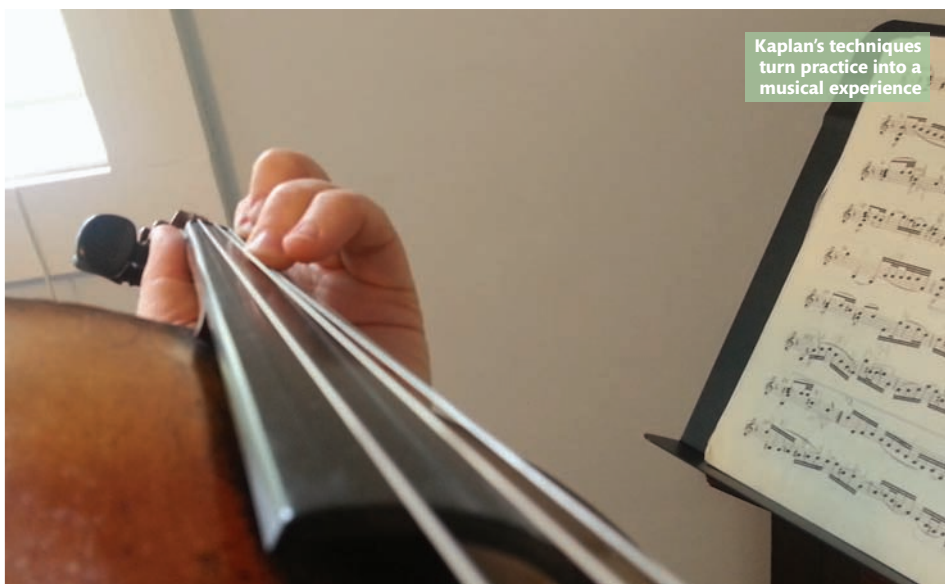
▲▲ Keeping a daily 'practice log' can be useful

▲ Studying a video of Jascha Heifetz

I start playing, I should focus on a point further on in the work. This can help to get in the right frame of mind. So my goals were to be relaxed for 90 per cent of the time and to make a beautiful sound 80 per cent of the time; to enjoy hearing Bach's language; and to listen for the beauty of the first bar of the Sarabande.

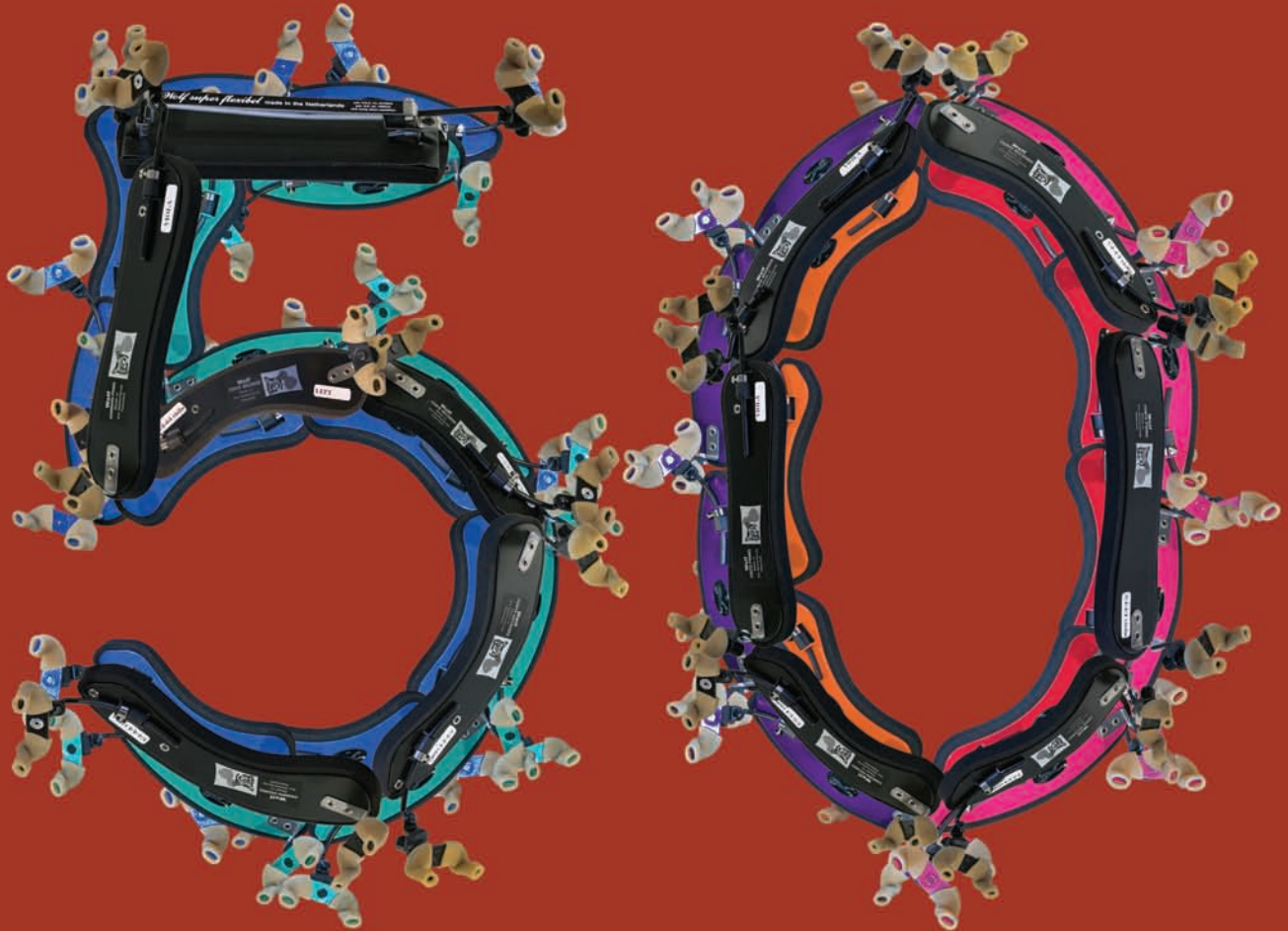
The final concert was exciting and moving. As a group we'd spent the previous two weeks interacting with each other, cooking and washing up together, learning about each other and our playing and rooting for each other – and this was the final strait of the journey. It was lovely to hear everyone play, to the best of their capacities, by and large fulfilling all the goals they set themselves. As for me, I was happy with how I played – and felt as though I had attained my own personal goals. The concert was followed up by a 're-entry' session, where we talked about what we'd learnt and how we were going to take it forward. We drank sherry together before dinner and packing up. The next day we all dispersed back to our daily lives to see if we could live up to the expectations we shared in the re-entry session.

If I'd spent two weeks in a house full of interesting people, eating good food and practising the violin five hours a day, it would have been enough. If I'd been shown profoundly effective practice techniques, or been offered deep musical insights, or been challenged to think in new ways, or given faith in my violin playing, or even just been introduced to Carlos Kleiber it would have been enough. That I experienced all these things at once makes my experience at Magic Mountain probably one of the most valuable two weeks of violin playing in my life. And it offers proof that one is never too old to learn. ■



Kaplan's techniques turn practice into a musical experience

ARANTE TODOS



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Inspired selection:
children on the LSO
Take a Bow scheme



MUSIC FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Next year, the London Symphony Orchestra celebrates 25 years of its LSO Discovery music education programme. We find out how the initiative's Take a Bow scheme is offering string players of all ages and abilities the chance to perform with members of one of the world's great orchestras

ALMOST TWO AND A HALF DECADES AGO the London Symphony Orchestra launched LSO Discovery, its much lauded and widely celebrated community and music education programme. Its aim was both noble and ambitious: to make the orchestra and its music accessible to as wide a spectrum of society as possible; to provide outreach opportunities for young people to experience and progress in making music and performing together; and to enable instrumentalists of all ages and abilities living in London to become directly involved in making music with LSO artists. In the words of the LSO Discovery mission statement: 'To enter the extraordinary sound world of the LSO.'

Since its launch the scheme has reached around 65,000 individuals per year across the capital and the South East of England, and the number of initiatives launched under the LSO Discovery umbrella has grown to include LSO On Track,

offering young instrumentalists across ten East London boroughs training and the opportunity to perform with the orchestra; and the LSO String Experience Scheme, providing work experience placements within the LSO to young musicians on the brink of a professional career – to name just two.

In 2007 the LSO Take a Bow scheme launched, which took the On Track model and applied it specifically to string players. Each year roughly 100 children aged between 7 and 17 are invited to rehearse alongside 24 LSO musicians and students from the LSO String Experience Scheme and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama at the orchestra's music education centre, LSO St Luke's church. After eight weeks of rehearsals the musicians perform together in concert at either the Barbican Centre or LSO St Luke's. In keeping with the project's spirit of inclusiveness, there are no auditions; instead, school-age participants are selected from music services and schools



▶ The Take a Bow ensemble in full swing at LSO St Luke's

For many Take a Bow participants, playing with the LSO will be their first ever performance experience

in East London according to their social background, the opportunities available to them, and their individual needs.

'At the heart of Take a Bow is an understanding that all players, no matter what their level, play an equally important part in a performance of the highest quality,' says Amy Majumdar, LSO On Track projects manager and overseer of LSO Discovery's work in East London. She says that many youngsters, especially at beginner level, receive very little one-to-one instrument teaching, and performance experiences are rarer still: a situation that Take a Bow seeks to redress. 'By playing alongside LSO musicians and music college students, they experience music making on a new level, and as the process goes on you

start to see young musicians subconsciously imitating the body language and styles of players who are more experienced, and with that comes a more confident sound.'

FOR MANY TAKE A BOW PARTICIPANTS, playing with the LSO is their first ever performance experience, and for the aspiring orchestral players among them there can be no better initiation into the profession. The emphasis of the scheme is very much on collaboration, inspiration and having fun, although rehearsals are intensive: LSO musicians lead sessions with each ability group, then participants come together to rehearse with the college students and LSO players. 'The scheme allows the children to observe young players at the next level up, and this gives them something to aspire to,' says Majumdar. 'For parents, coming along to the performance may be the first time they have seen the musical potential of their child: the progression is mapped out in front of them, all the way up to professional level.'

LSO violinist Belinda McFarlane has been centrally involved in the development of the Take a Bow London projects since the outset. She says the project is not about reaching for perfection but creating an inspirational experience for all involved: 'The ethos is that whatever your ability, you have been trained and rehearsed to reach your optimum level,' she says. 'So the artistic

experience is the same for a beginner on double bass playing open strings as it is for the soloist playing at the top of their game: the cooperative experience on stage is that of high art.'

How does such a mixed ensemble sound? 'Amazing – it's very special,' she says. 'You've got cellos, violins and basses of all sizes, from the Guadagnini violin of the concertmaster to the pink quarter-size violin being played by a kid from one of the music services. But everyone is playing their heart out, and the LSO players find the performances as thrilling as the kids do.'

The learning curve is by no means restricted to the participants: the professional musicians involved in Take a Bow also face unique challenges, not least the conductor, who must explore how to approach each work using an ensemble of players of different ages and abilities. At the most elementary level, this means introducing the very basics of orchestral playing: starting and stopping together, observing the dynamics and, of course, watching the conductor. Also fundamental to the success of the project is enrolling composers whose specialism is writing or arranging for mixed-ability groups; and because Take a Bow is all about equal opportunities, each string part carries equal importance – from beginner (open strings) through grades 1–4, grades 5–8, grade 8 plus, up to professional level. Past programmes have included pieces as diverse as Bach's Concerto for Two Violins in an arrangement by the Welsh composer Gareth Glyn, Glyn's own work *EGAD!*, and British composer Jeff Moore's *The Sea and the Sky*, in a world premiere performance. Concert programmes also include a short work performed by the 24-string LSO ensemble and soloists.

Plans for Take a Bow 2015 are still being finalised, and with the project's continuing evolution, there will no doubt be surprises in store. Majumdar can reveal that British violinist Nicola Benedetti will be involved in helping to guide the young players through the rehearsal processes in preparation for their performance at LSO St Luke's on 22 June 2015.

'For the participants, rehearsing alongside world-class musicians, experiencing such quality of playing at close proximity, takes them to a new level of musical experience,' says Majumdar. 'The fact that they have got to know these musicians personally makes the experience even more thrilling.' ■

The next Take a Bow concert takes place at LSO St Luke's on 22 June 2015, as part of the LSO International Violin Festival. Visit <http://lso.co.uk/violinfestival>



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Flights of Fantasy

Beginning with *The Lark Ascending*, written 100 years ago, Vaughan Williams found an ideal musical form for all five of his string concertante pieces. JULIAN HAYLOCK explores these varied, idiomatic works

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS was a master of adaptability. If the string writing of his near-contemporary, Edward Elgar, emerged naturally out of the Romantic cantabile tradition of Mendelssohn, Dvořák and Brahms, Vaughan Williams was more of a free spirit who tailored the form and texture of his writing to suit the specific requirements of each new work. Such versatility was at odds with his training, which during the 1890s followed the traditional route of London's Royal College of Music, Trinity College, Cambridge and Max Bruch in Berlin; but his developing fascination with indigenous folk song, which he began collecting in 1903, opened up new worlds of creative

DANIEL NELSON



▲ *The Lark Ascending* became one of Ralph Vaughan Williams's most popular early works

possibility and a three-month period of study with Maurice Ravel in 1909 fully ignited his composing genius. 'He showed me how to orchestrate in points of colour rather than in lines,' Vaughan Williams said in his 1950 *Musical Autobiography*. 'It was an invigorating experience to find all artistic problems looked at from what was to me an entirely new angle.'

The most notable immediate outcome of this was a groundbreaking work for string orchestra, illuminated throughout by exquisite writing for a solo string quartet: the *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* (1910).

Of Vaughan Williams's five concertante pieces for string instruments only the Violin Concerto carries a generic title ▶

– and it was originally published as *Concerto accademico*, a name redolent of a neoclassical idiom that Elgar would never have countenanced. His two solo viola works are both suite-like in nature – *Flos campi* in six movements, the Suite in eight – yet are quite different. In the former the soloist is *primus inter pares*, weaving in and out of the orchestral and choral textures, playing the role of collaborator and commentator as much as instigator, whereas in the latter the instrument is the nexus through which the music flows. The cello *Fantasia on Sussex Folk Tunes* is more traditional in tone (this partly explains the composer's decision to withdraw it), yet most unconventional of all is a work that has won unprecedented popularity in recent years: *The Lark Ascending*.

'HE RISES AND BEGINS TO ROUND' He drops the silver chain of sound/Of many links without a break/In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake.' The opening lines of George Meredith's 1881 poem *The Lark Ascending* had long resonated in Vaughan Williams's mind before he penned the sublime modal introduction that sets up the violin soloist's slow ascent into the musical stratosphere. Beethoven regarded his 'Pastoral' Symphony as 'more an expression of feeling than painting', and this description could equally apply to *The Lark Ascending*. There are no Messiaen-like attempts to render exactly the lark's distinctive song, nor is the score littered with poetic quotations in the manner of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*.

Unfailingly attentive to the soaring refinement of his subject matter, Vaughan Williams calls on a wide variety of chamber-scale textures, with the strings invariably producing a velvety cushion of sound against which the woodwind – two each of flutes, clarinets and bassoons, plus one oboe – and a pair of French horns provide colour, with a triangle adding piquancy to the relatively brief Allegro tranquillo middle section.

The violin was a natural choice for *The Lark Ascending* – it can 'chirrup' and 'flutter' with ease and sustain long, pure notes in its highest register

Although Vaughan Williams described the work as a 'pastoral romance', 'meditation' seems more fitting for such an exquisite flow of time-suspending poetics.

The violin was a natural choice of solo instrument, for not only does it possess the necessary extended range to soar aloft, it can 'chirrup' and 'flutter' with ease and sustain long, pure notes in its highest register. Yet what sets Vaughan Williams's solo writing apart is its complete absence of virtuoso display. The solo line's meditative intricacies are merciless in their revealing of concert nerves and tension, yet there is not a single hollow note of ostentation – even the mild sprinkling of double-stopping evokes a sensation of avian contentment.



▲ Violist Lionel Tertis was the soloist for the premieres of both *Flos campi* and the Suite for Solo Viola

Not only does Vaughan Williams subtly engage the violin's open strings to lend sparkle to its warbling chains of melodic 4ths, he enhances the atmosphere by directing the soloist to play *sur la touche* (on the fingerboard) in order to convey a sense of increasing height and distance. After 15 minutes of exacting writing in which the tonal purity and ringing intonation of every note is paramount, the solo line rises gently towards the end of the fingerboard and fades away gently into the distance.

The music's sense of weightlessness is further intensified by Vaughan Williams's studious avoidance of traditional tonal rhetoric, blurring the music's gravitational centre by combining the gentle harmonic cushioning of the Dorian mode with a pentatonic (five-note) scale – a technique he learned from Ravel. The sensation of temporal suspension is again heightened by the omission of regular bar-lines (*senza misura*) in three key places – most notably during the opening and closing sections – allowing the soloist to hoist its song aloft with an unusual degree of interpretative flexibility.

Composed with the help of former violin prodigy and favourite Elgar pupil Marie Hall, who premiered both the orchestra and piano-accompanied versions, *The Lark Ascending* was the final work Vaughan Williams completed before the declaration of war on 4 August 1914. His widow Ursula's claim, many years after the event, that he composed it in response to British troops preparing to leave for the Continent lacks firm corroboration. Yet whatever the truth of the matter, the music's nostalgic depiction of a world on the verge of irrevocable change lends the idea an undeniable poignancy. Having served as an artillery officer during the war, it was on his return to England that Vaughan Williams discovered *The Lark Ascending* sitting in a drawer where he'd left it four years before, having apparently forgotten all about it.



◀ The Violin Concerto, then known as the *Concerto accademico*, was premiered in 1925 with Hungarian virtuoso Jelly d'Arányi as soloist

Seven years later, in 1925, Vaughan Williams returned to string concertante writing with two works that approach the problem of composing in the postwar era from two highly contrasted perspectives. The first to be premiered was the unique musical hybrid *Flos campi* (Latin for 'flower of the field'). The premiere took place on 10 October with solo violist Lionel Tertis and a wordless chorus recruited from the Royal College of Music, together with the Queen's Hall Orchestra conducted by Henry Wood. The audience that evening was left slightly bewildered by what was considered at the time to be a decidedly 'modern' score, one that was made up of six continuous sections, each headed by a silent Latin quotation from the Song of Solomon. Many wrongly assumed (the concert programme failed to include an English translation) that it was a purely religious work, and others thought its harmonically unsettling opening was a haunting response to the futility of war. Even the composer's friend Gustav Holst confessed that he 'couldn't get hold of it'. In frustration, Vaughan Williams told an interviewer: 'It matters, of course, enormously to the composer what he was thinking about when he composed a particular work; but to no one else in this world does it matter one jot.'

THE ORIGINAL (UNSUNG) TEXTS and sensuous sound world would suggest that *Flos campi* is a song of love, yet the sometimes unsettlingly remote idiom and the fact that the words remain unarticulated (despite the presence of a small choir) suggest darker musical undercurrents. No less significant is the solo viola, an instrument Vaughan Williams 'knew well and loved' according to Ursula, and one that might well have become his main study had his parents not considered it 'unworthy of serious attention' and pushed him firmly in the direction of the organ. Unlike the Ravelian 'cool' of *The Lark Ascending*, the viola of *Flos campi* undergoes an intimate emotional journey ranging from the opening's bitonal duetting with a plaintive oboe, to the cantabile richness of the second section and the fourth's march-like vivacity, until in the end it becomes the last man standing as the choir and other instruments all fall away.

If in *Flos campi* Vaughan Williams allows us to peer into his very soul, in the three-movement Violin Concerto in D minor he gently distances himself by cloaking the music in an 'olden style'. (Revealingly, his teacher Ravel had adopted a similar procedure when remembering his friends who had fallen in the Great War in his solo suite for piano and orchestra, *Le tombeau de Couperin*, completed in 1917). When the *Concerto accademico*, as it was then known, was premiered on 6 November 1925 by its dedicatee, Hungarian virtuoso Jelly d'Arányi, regular London concertgoers could scarcely credit it as the work of the same composer. In place of *The Lark Ascending*'s soaring eloquence and ▶

▼ Cellist Pablo Casals was the soloist and dedicatee when the *Fantasia on Sussex Folk Tunes* made its debut in 1930



When the *Concerto accademico* was premiered, London concertgoers could scarcely credit it as the work of Vaughan Williams

Flos campi's introspective musings, Vaughan Williams fashioned the score against a background of neoclassical gestures to create what was described in *The Times* newspaper as 'an essay in style' – with the caveat that its composer wasn't much of a stylist.

Unfathomably neglected, the Violin Concerto is a masterpiece of creative fusion in which Vaughan Williams's distinctly English sense of fantasy, Gallic instinct for musical atmosphere and Germanic rigour unite in a devoted Bachian homage. Bach's Double Violin Concerto provides the emotional springboard for the central Adagio tranquillo, and the Moto perpetuo finale strangely anticipates Barber's Violin Concerto (1939). On virtually any page of the score's outer movements, the recurring, archetypal rhythmic patternings of its Baroque antecedents are plain to see. Yet in practice, so complete is the composer's absorption in the music's stylistic cross-referencing that the resulting sound world could be the work of no other composer.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS FINALLY PRODUCED a concertante work in a more easily approachable idiom – the *Fantasia on Sussex Folk Tunes* for cello and orchestra of 1929, dedicated to and premiered by Pablo Casals on 13 March 1930 – but found the results so dispiriting that he withdrew the score altogether (the world premiere recording by Julian Lloyd Webber and first publication didn't emerge until the 1980s). The brief opening section, juxtaposing grand orchestral unisons with dramatic solo recitatives, sounds strangely impersonal, and although the selection of folk tunes that follows is attractively presented, there are relatively few indelible turns of phrase along the way. The effect is of Holstian skill and emotional detachment, with little sign of the warmth and charm that are characteristic of Vaughan Williams's finest work in this idiom. The more flamboyant passages feel grafted on rather than part of the music's inner fabric, making his decision to hide the work from further public scrutiny understandable, even if it hardly deserved to be consigned to his bottom drawer for over half a century.

Rather more personal in tone is the Suite for Vaughan Williams's beloved viola, premiered by Lionel Tertis with the London Philharmonic conducted by Malcolm Sargent on 12 November 1934 (the watershed year that witnessed the deaths of Delius, Elgar and Holst in quick succession). Cast unconventionally in eight movements subdivided into three groups (3 + 2 + 3) and subtly scored for small orchestra (including harp and celesta), it is another in the line of unaccountably neglected works by Vaughan Williams, one that gives free rein to the instrument's unique voice already apparent since the two-violin *Phantasy Quintet* (1912), the viola Romance of c.1914 (possibly also intended for Tertis), *Flos campi* and the sanctioned viola transcription of the *Six Studies in English Folksong* (1926).

RECOMMENDED RECORDINGS



The Lark Ascending

Tasmin Little (violin) BBC Philharmonic Orchestra/Andrew Davis
CHANDOS CHAN 10796



Pinchas Zukerman (violin) English Chamber Orchestra/Daniel Barenboim
AUSTRALIAN ELOQUENCE ELQ 4428333

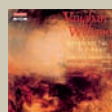


Flos campi

Lawrence Power (viola) BBC National Chorus & Orchestra of Wales/Martyn Brabbins
HYPERION CDA 67839

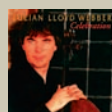


Philip Dukes (viola) Sinfonia Chorus, Northern Sinfonia/Richard Hickox
CHANDOS CHAN 9392



Violin Concerto

(*Concerto accademico*)
Kenneth Sillito (violin) London Symphony Orchestra/Bryden Thomson
CHANDOS CHAN 8633



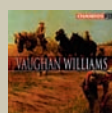
Fantasia on Sussex Folk Tunes

Julian Lloyd Webber (cello)
Philharmonia Orchestra/Vernon Handley
SONY BMG 74321 84112 2 (TWO DISCS)



Suite for Viola

Lawrence Power (viola), BBC National Orchestra of Wales/Martyn Brabbins
HYPERION CDA 67839



Frederick Riddle (viola), Bournemouth Sinfonietta/Norman Del Mar
CHANDOS CHAN 241-9 (TWO DISCS)

Any notion of the viola possessing a limited expressive range is vaporised by the exuberant variety of Vaughan Williams's invention, which hones in on the instrument's unique tonal properties at every turn. Each group ends with lively rejoicing – a Christmas Dance, Moto Perpetuo and Galop respectively – and embraces a number of historically stylised movements along the way, including a Prelude, Ballad and Musette. The Christmas Dance in particular demonstrates the composer's complete grasp of the viola's physical layout, with a series of multiple-stoppings that utilise its open strings, natural resonances and 'sweet spots' with considerable insight. Most touching is the innocent-sounding Carol that sits in the middle of the first group – this is music that could have been written for no other instrument and captures the viola's elusive voice with absolute precision. ■



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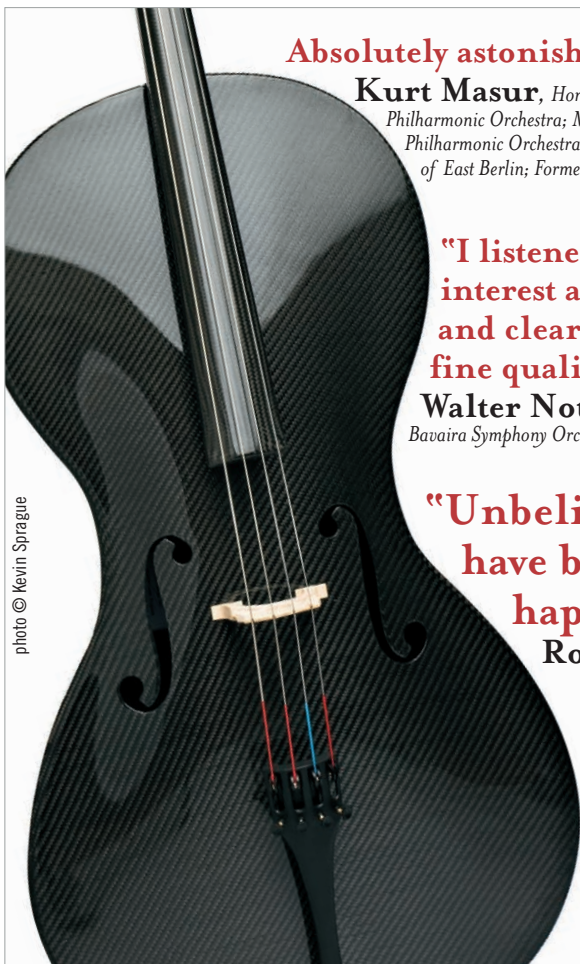
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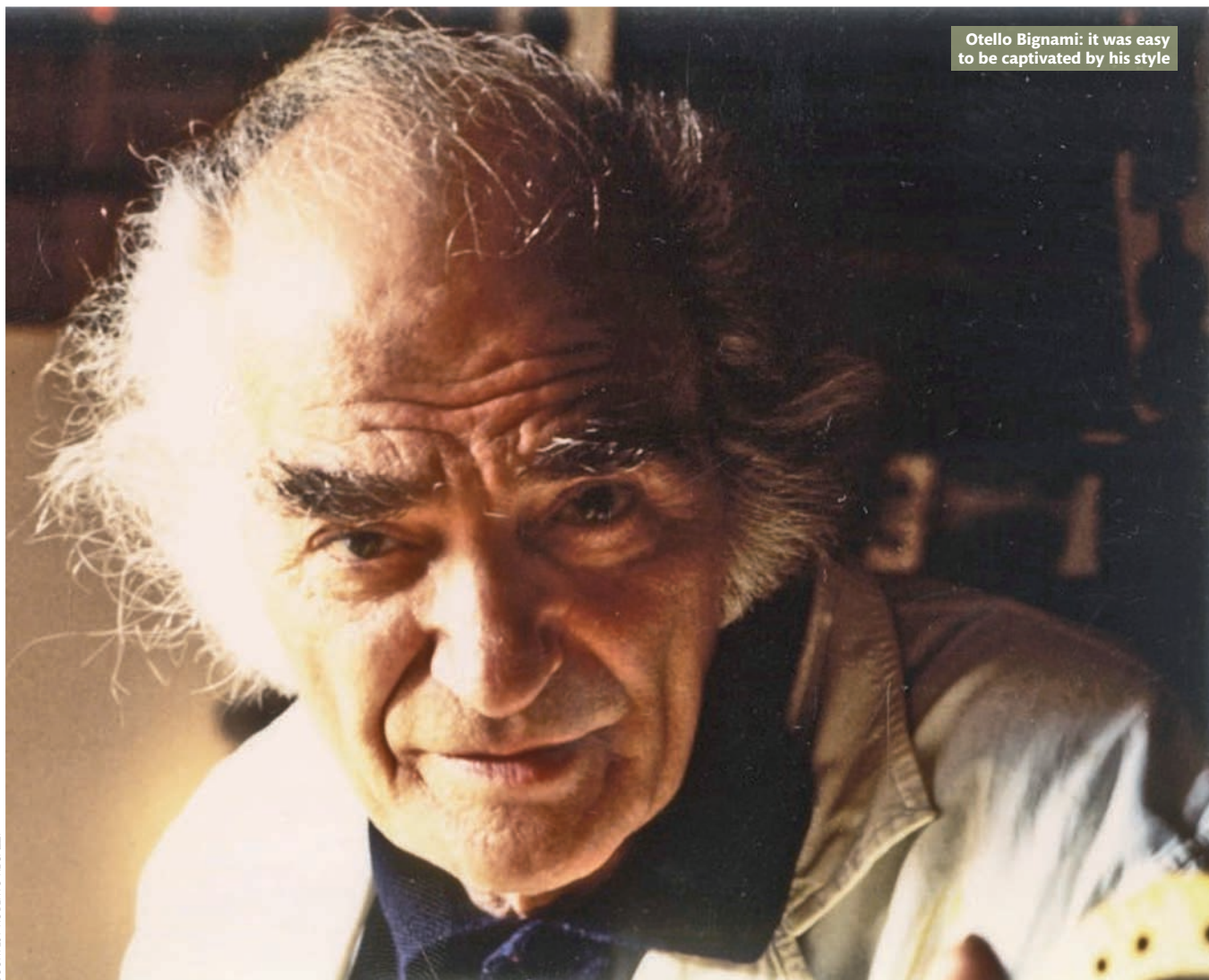
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Otello Bignami: it was easy to be captivated by his style

COURTESY ROBERTO REGAZZI

SPIRIT OF DIVERSITY

An exhibition of instruments by the Italian maker Otello Bignami opens in Bologna next month. ROBERTO REGAZZI explores the life and career of his former tutor, and assesses his contribution to the Bologna school of violin making

BOLOGNA'S MUSIC MUSEUM IS AN UNEXPECTED delight in the northern Italian city's historic centre. After perusing the extensive collection of antique instruments, visitors may be surprised to find themselves in the midst of a violin maker's workshop, with benches, tools, woods and resins immaculately preserved from the 1980s. Each exhibit comes from the collection of Otello Bignami, and next month the Museo Internazionale e Libreria della Musica di Bologna launches a three-week exhibition dedicated to the Bologna-born luthier, with ten of his instruments displayed alongside three by his teachers. It's a fitting tribute to a key figure in 20th-century Bolognese lutherie,

and a man who did more to further the art form than any of his contemporaries. As the founder of the city's only official violin making school and a tutor to many of today's most prominent Bolognese makers, Bignami left a legacy of knowledge and experience that will benefit generations to come.

Born in 1914, Bignami turned to lutherie relatively late: from childhood until his mid-thirties he worked almost exclusively as a furniture restorer. During that time he cultivated his passion for playing the violin, and made it his life's ambition to become a violin maker, even though by that time he was married with two young children and had no reputation as a luthier to draw on, nor any regular clientele. Every evening and weekend in the ▶



COURTESY ROBERTO REGAZZI

▲ The workshop of Otello Bignami as it looked just after the luthier's death in 1989

► Right: the workshop has been painstakingly recreated as part of the permanent exhibition at the Bologna Music Museum



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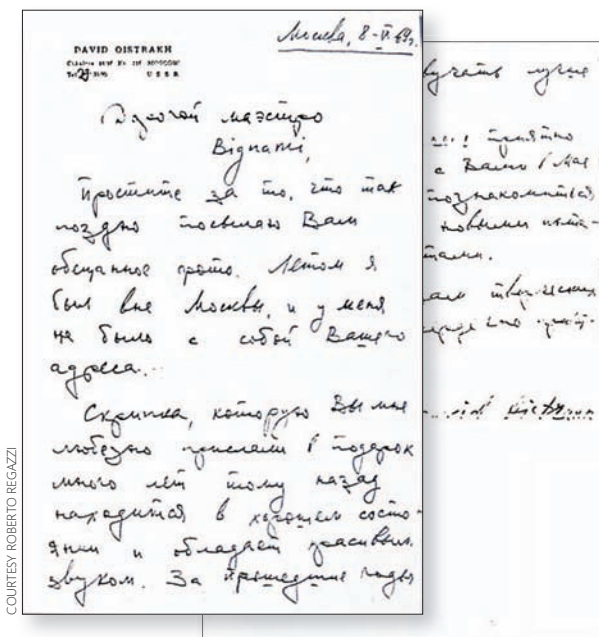
years following the Second World War he would sit in his kitchen with a few tools, teaching himself the art of instrument making. Gradually he honed his craft and became known among local musicians, while continuing his regular work.

As the 1940s drew to a close, Bignami's craftsmanship attracted the attention of Gaetano Pollastri, one of the best-known Bolognese makers of the time (see box, page 65), who was then in his sixties. 'I had the greatest esteem for Pollastri,' Bignami recalled in an interview in *The Strad* in 1984. 'I remember my heart racing ahead when he was about to examine my work. Picking up one of my instruments, he said: "You've already got there!" which moved me deeply. And to think I was self-taught! After a short time Pollastri allowed me to consider myself his pupil and gave me his personal moulds for violin and cello.'

FOR THE NEXT DECADE Bignami made instruments under Pollastri's supervision, periodically entering competitions and finding some success: his violins won silver medals at the Santa Cecilia National Academy competition in 1955, and a Bignami viola took gold there a year later; and at the 1957 Wieniawski Competition in Poland, he received a special gold medal as the best Italian maker. After Pollastri's death in 1960, Bignami received

requests for instruments from dealers around the world, but he remained focused on satisfying his own clients. Perhaps the most illustrious of his customers at the time was the Russian violinist David Oistrakh, who acquired two Bignami violins during one of his tours of Italy in 1969. Twenty years later, Bignami was still telling his students about his meeting with the great man: despite the language barrier, he recalled a feeling of mutual admiration and good feeling between them: as he put it, 'At the end, a warm hug was more eloquent than a thousand words'.

The conductor Sergiu Celibidache was another good friend of the Bignamis, and made frequent visits to the workshop. Other renowned clients included violinist Eugène Ysaÿe's pupil Aldo Ferraresi, violists Ernst Wallfisch, Harold Coletta and Renzo Sabatini, and cellist Benedetto Mazzacurati. It was easy to be captivated by Bignami's charming style: in his daily life he was a sweet and generous man. When he was aware of a friend in need, he would often find a way of helping them indirectly



▲ Among Bignami's friends and clients was the Russian violinist David Oistrakh, who sent him this letter on 8 September 1969

— perhaps via a mutual friend — to avoid the risk of humiliating or offending them. He was always busy, and when not at his bench he was painting, playing the violin with old friends or telling jokes in Bolognese dialect.

AFTER POLLASTRI'S DEATH in 1960, only one other professional maker remained in Bologna: Ansaldo Poggi. Neither he nor Bignami had taken on many pupils, so the question of how the Bologna school would continue through future generations became a matter of some debate. In the 1970s Bignami took the initiative to rectify the situation by working with the local authorities to establish a small dedicated violin making school. He also began teaching a small number of students at his home, including Paola Malaguti, Pietro Trimboli, Curzio Rossi, Paolo Ansaloni, Franco Samoggia, Luigi Laterrenia and this writer.

Malaguti became Bignami's teaching assistant when the Bologna School of Violin Making opened its doors in 1979, offering a four-year course in lutherie. It was never Bignami's intention to establish a large school: like his predecessor, Raffaele Fiorini (see box), he believed that only a small number of highly talented makers could make it in the competitive violin market, and that those few makers would be enough for the Bologna school to survive. The opening of the school was the realisation of a dream that extended back to the 1910s, when Fiorini's son Giuseppe had made concerted efforts to establish a training school for young makers. Although it remained open for only four years, it produced 18 luthiers in that short time.

The atmosphere at the school was always one of friendship and camaraderie, and in this environment students learnt not only the techniques of lutherie but a whole philosophy of life. As a teacher Bignami was always communicative and willing to share everything he knew. His teaching style was to present his knowledge, but never to be dogmatic. Throughout his career, he made instruments using an external mould, as Pollastri had taught him, but he would also explain the use



LUTHERIE IN BOLOGNA: A BRIEF HISTORY

The most important figure in the development of the Bolognese lutherie tradition is undoubtedly Raffaele Fiorini (1828–98). Born in Musiano di Pianoro, about ten miles south of the city, he was initially taught in Modena before moving to Bologna and establishing a workshop in 1868. Although he made few violins, he built many cellos in the classic Italian style and was an excellent restorer of antique instruments; most significantly, though, he took on several pupils who helped to re-establish Bologna as a violin making centre. Among them were Augusto Pollastri, the brothers Cesare and Oreste Candi, Armando Monterumici and Fiorini's son Giuseppe. The shop endured until 1897, the year before Fiorini's death.

Giuseppe Fiorini (1861–1934) became one of the most successful luthiers of his day. He spent several years working, dealing and teaching in Munich before the First World War caused him to move to Zurich. He moved to Rome in 1923: teaching privately, he counted Paolo Morara, Simone Sacconi and Ansaldo Poggi among his pupils. He carefully studied Stradivari's instruments and bought more than 1,300 tools, templates, plates, moulds and relics from the Stradivari workshop. He tried to use this collection as the foundation for a top-class violin making school, attempting to find support in Bologna, Florence and Rome before finally donating the collection to the city of Cremona in 1930. In the event, the city's International Violin Making School opened its doors in 1938, four years after Fiorini's death.

Another of Raffaele's students, Augusto Pollastri (1877–1927), became just as influential in the development of Bolognese lutherie. After some experimenting with models from Turin, he settled on a model of his own design somewhat influenced by the work of Stradivari, which would later be used by a number of different makers. He made just 64 instruments in his lifetime, all to a high standard, and among his pupils was his son, Gaetano (1886–1960). A violinist and repairer of instruments, Gaetano went on to teach a few well-known luthiers: Franco Albanelli, Marco Dobretsovich, Cesare Pollastri and Otello Bignami.

THE BOLOGNA STYLE

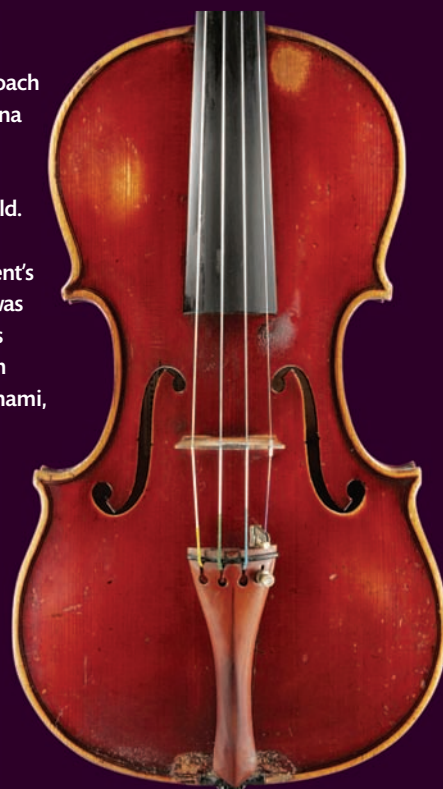
Do instruments of the Bologna school truly have a defined style? Luthiers from the time of Raffaele Fiorini have placed an emphasis on individuality, so it can be hard to pick out elements that signify the various makers. However, certain points of identification do exist.

When asked to define some of the features of Bolognese violins in 1984, Bignami said: 'The purfling is peculiar, in that it is made up of three stripes of equal thickness. The C-bouts of our violins resemble those of Amatis: the curve has a particularly elegant shape. The Bolognese model is altogether very elegant.'

Bolognese varnishes tend to be red and orange in colour; some of the older makers used to give a few coats of oil-based varnish to the instrument, finishing the varnishing after several months with ten or twelve coats of well-formulated spirit varnish. For colouring, turmeric, Black Boy gum and dragon's blood (the old kind) were used, while anilines and synthetic products were rigorously avoided.

In terms of technique, the Fiorini approach was French: he had been taught in Modena with Giuseppe and Ignazio Tadolini, who had spent some time in France and had shown Fiorini the use of an external mould. One of the advantages of this method is that it allows luthiers to copy an instrument's outline precisely (which Otello Bignami was always careful to do). All Fiorini's students were taught using the same method. Both Augusto and Gaetano Pollastri – and Bignami, who studied with Gaetano – mainly used Raffaele Fiorini's methods.

However, Fiorini's son Giuseppe closely studied the works of Stradivari and Guadagnini, and subsequently adopted the classical Cremonese method, using an internal mould. Bignami's contemporary, Ansaldo Poggi, was a pupil of Giuseppe, meaning that both the French and Cremonese methods are still in use by their Bolognese students today.



ROBERTO REGAZZI

of an internal mould, in accordance with the Cremonese method, and from time to time he would branch out and make a violin using no mould at all. As he explained to his students, the main advantage of using an external mould was to keep an exact record of the instrument's outline: he paid a great deal of attention to dimensions, something that greatly affects the aesthetics and acoustics of the completed instrument. In his later years Bignami finally developed his own personal model, which he used until the end of his life and allowed his pupils to use.

HAVING SPENT SO MUCH of his life as a furniture restorer, Bignami was extremely knowledgeable about the ingredients and application of varnish. Again, in his teaching he preferred to impart his knowledge, then allow his students to make their own informed decisions for each individual instrument: the ingredients and their proportions. This principle encapsulates the message that Bignami tried to instil in his pupils: not simply to imitate the work of luthiers who had come before, but to bring their own personality and creativity into everything they did. Indeed, this approach links all the most distinguished makers of the Bologna school: an appreciation of the classical tradition combined with a flair for finding original solutions. For this reason Bignami was never intimidated by the work of Antonio Stradivari or Guarneri 'del Gesù'. He admired their achievements, but preferred to use models that allowed him a certain freedom in his work, such as those by Nicolò Amati.



Students at the Bologna School of Violin Making in 1979

COURTESY ROBERTO REGAZZI

Bignami's house was always full of visitors, and players were likely to take advantage of a problem with their instrument as an excuse to come by the workshop and meet up with old friends, or even find new musical contacts. Often they might simply start playing their instruments without any fear of impropriety or 'rule-breaking'. There was no shortage of instruments in Bignami's atelier, after all. And perhaps unusually for a violin maker, Bignami was an accomplished player himself, having finally graduated from the Bologna Philharmonic Academy at the age of 57, fulfilling one of his lifetime's ambitions. ■

The Bologna Music Museum's exhibition of Otello Bignami instruments runs from 23 October–9 November



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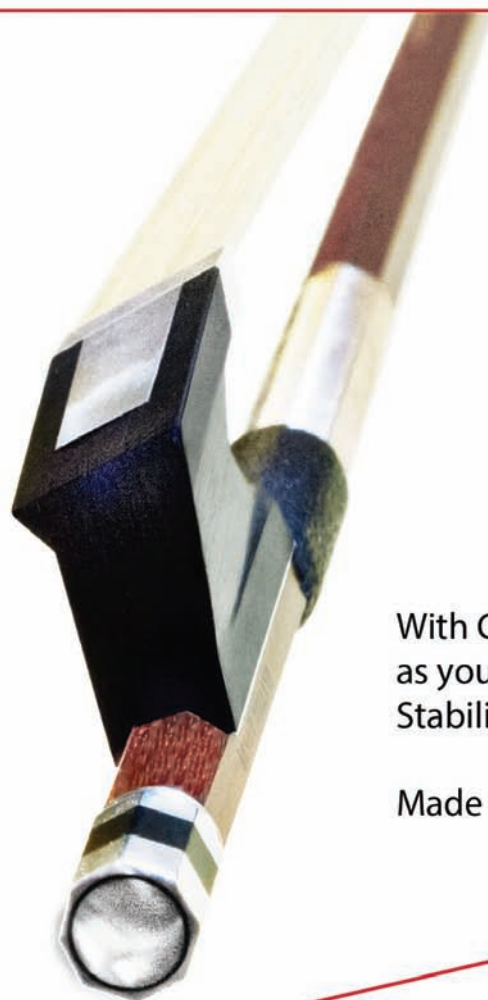
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DAVID TECCHLER

WRITTEN BY TOM WILDER

MAKER Born around 1666, probably in the parish of Lechbruck in south-west Germany, David Tecchler moved to Rome some time in the 1690s where he is believed to have been apprenticed to Alberto Platner (c.1642–1713). He established his own workshop in the parish of San Lorenzo in Damaso in 1698, although he changed addresses a number of times over the next 30 years. Despite the decidedly modest social status of violin and guitar makers in 18th-century Rome – their per-capita income being less than a third of that of a similarly qualified harpsichord maker – Tecchler was well known in his lifetime, especially for his cellos, and was sometimes referred to as ‘Maestro David’ in inventories of the period. Three hundred years later, he is still considered to be the foremost maker of the Roman school. His earliest

known instrument dates from 1697; his production tapered off substantially after 1730.

INSTRUMENT Formerly in the inventory of William Lewis & Son, Chicago, US, this 1706 cello was acquired by the Canada Council for the Arts in 1987 and has been on loan to the Canadian cellist Denis Brott ever since. It is in an excellent state of preservation.

MATERIALS The ribs, scroll and four-piece back are all made of quarter-cut maple of medium-strong flame. The top is marked by ‘bear-claw’ or ‘hazel’ figure. The grain of the spruce, which is regular and pronounced, broadens towards the flanks.

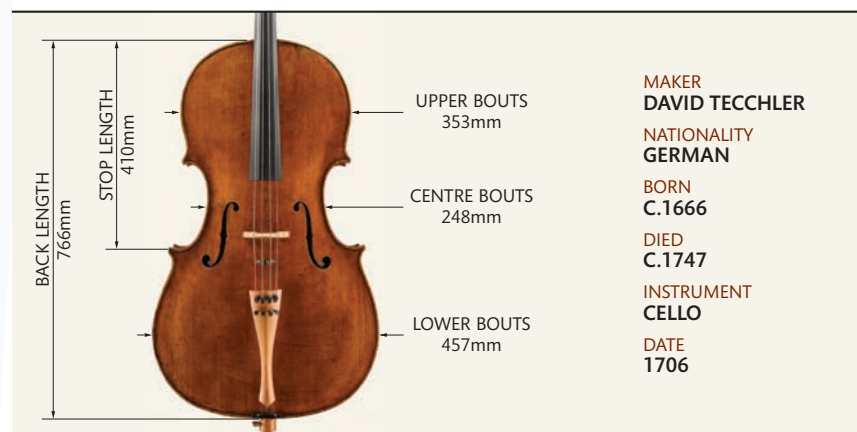
FORM AND CONSTRUCTION Whereas Tecchler’s violins tend to resemble those of Jacob Stainer, his cellos are more Cremonese in conception. This example was originally built on a large form

typical of the time – the Hills note that only four of the fifty Tecchler cellos they had examined had small proportions – but was subsequently reduced in size to suit the needs of players of the 19th and 20th centuries. As a result, the arching appears to be exceptionally full with a well-defined channel all around the edge. The purfling is finely executed and inlaid fairly close to the edge. The form of the elegantly cut f-holes, set upright and spaced widely apart, betrays both Italian and German influences.

SCROLL The attractive scroll is narrow in width and the turns of the volute and the fluting on the back of the strongly flared pegbox are quite deeply carved. The eyes of the scroll are large and flat, the chamfers thin to start with. They are now rather worn.

VARNISH The varnish is golden-orange in colour and of great depth and luminosity. ■

ALL PHOTOS: JEAN FITZGERALD







Using glass bead to measure wood density and interior air volume

A material used in sandblasting can be utilised to give quick and accurate measurements

BY DOUGLAS COX

LUTHIER BASED IN WEST BRATTLEBORO, VERMONT, US

IN ORDER TO GROW AS A MAKER it is helpful to gain as much information as possible from one's own work, as well as the work of others. In my workshop I am always looking for quick and easy ways to gather and record data – ways that do not interrupt the flow of my work. Sometimes these methods come from completely different occupations. Here are two systems I have developed, using glass bead – a modern industrial material used in sandblasting.

Because I work on a wide range of violin and viola models, often with non-traditional woods, I want to know the interior volume of my instruments. I also want to document the densities of wood used in specific instruments, new and old.

Interior air volume is closely related to the basic resonant frequency of the instrument, and will affect the darkness or brightness of the sound: the larger the air volume, the lower the frequency and the darker the perceived tone colour. I record as much about each instrument as possible, in the belief that it will help me learn and might be of interest to researchers in the future.

Made up of tiny spheres, glass bead behaves in a manner that closely approximates the way a liquid conforms to complex shapes. This is not a perfect system, but it is the best I have found for quick and easy use with unique and unusual pieces of wood.



Pouring glass bead into the rib cage



The bead is made level



Transferring the bead to the container

1 Measuring the volume

The method for measuring volume is fairly straightforward. Before the top is put on the instrument, I place the back (with rib cage attached) in a five-gallon container and fill it with glass bead labelled '50-70 coarse mesh' (1a). I level the bead with

a straightedge, making sure that any extra bead lands in the container as it falls away from the instrument (1b). I brush away any glass bead that may have settled on top of the instrument blocks or edges. Finally, the bead within the back and ribs is poured into a two-gallon container (1c).



F-holes covered in masking tape



The resulting impression of the f-holes



Pouring bead into the top plate



The bead is poured into a measuring cylinder

2 Before repeating the process for the top plate, I cover the f-holes with masking tape on the outside (2a). The tape serves two purposes: it prevents the glass bead from pouring out when the top is filled, and it creates a reproduction of the shape of each f-hole from the bead that sticks to it (2b). Then I fill the top plate with glass bead as above (2c) and repeat the process.

3 I place a one-litre graduated cylinder on a 2kg-capacity digital scale, then weigh the cylinder and tare the scale. Then I pour the combined bead collected from the back and top from the two-gallon container into the graduated cylinder via a funnel. I have found that measuring the weight of the bead is the easiest and most consistently accurate way of finding the volume, although because of the amount of bead and the size of the cylinder, more than one weight measurement is necessary. >



Measuring the weight of the bead

4 Measuring the weight of the bead

I weigh the bead inside the cylinder. Then I find the musical instrument's interior air volume by dividing the weight by the average grams-per-litre ratio of coarse glass bead: 760 g/l.

It can be surprising how the outline, rib height and arch, as well as the shaping of the blocks and linings, all affect the interior air volume of the finished instrument, and at the same time have unique effects on the stiffness and mass of the body structure.

5 Measuring the density

To find the density of the top and back plates, I use the equation: density equals weight divided by volume. The plates' weight is easy to measure but finding the volume of an irregular piece of wood, or a finished plate, is a problem. My solution is to measure the displacement when the plate is put into a container of known volume – water would work well in such a system, except

it soaks into the wood, changing its weight and volume, and causing other problems. The glass bead can serve as 'dry water', giving us the displacement without the side effects.

For this process, I use medium-fine glass bead. I have made my own wooden displacement containers, sized for violin and viola plates. First I measure the volume of the empty container using glass bead, as in steps 1 to 3. (It is a good idea to take this measurement frequently, because the container's interior volume can change due to humidity.) The weight of the bead found at this stage is the 'full weight'.

I put the top plate (in either its rough or its finished state) into the empty container (5a), which I then fill with glass bead. Then I shake the container until the bead has settled, refill it and level off the top with a straightedge (5b).



The top enters a displacement container



Levelling the top



Pouring off the bead

I pour out the bead and weigh it, as in step 4. This weight is then subtracted from the 'full weight', to find the displacement weight. From there, the volume is found by dividing the grams-per-litre ratio of the bead: 1530.6g/l. It is then a simple matter to find the density by dividing the mass of the plate by the volume. ■



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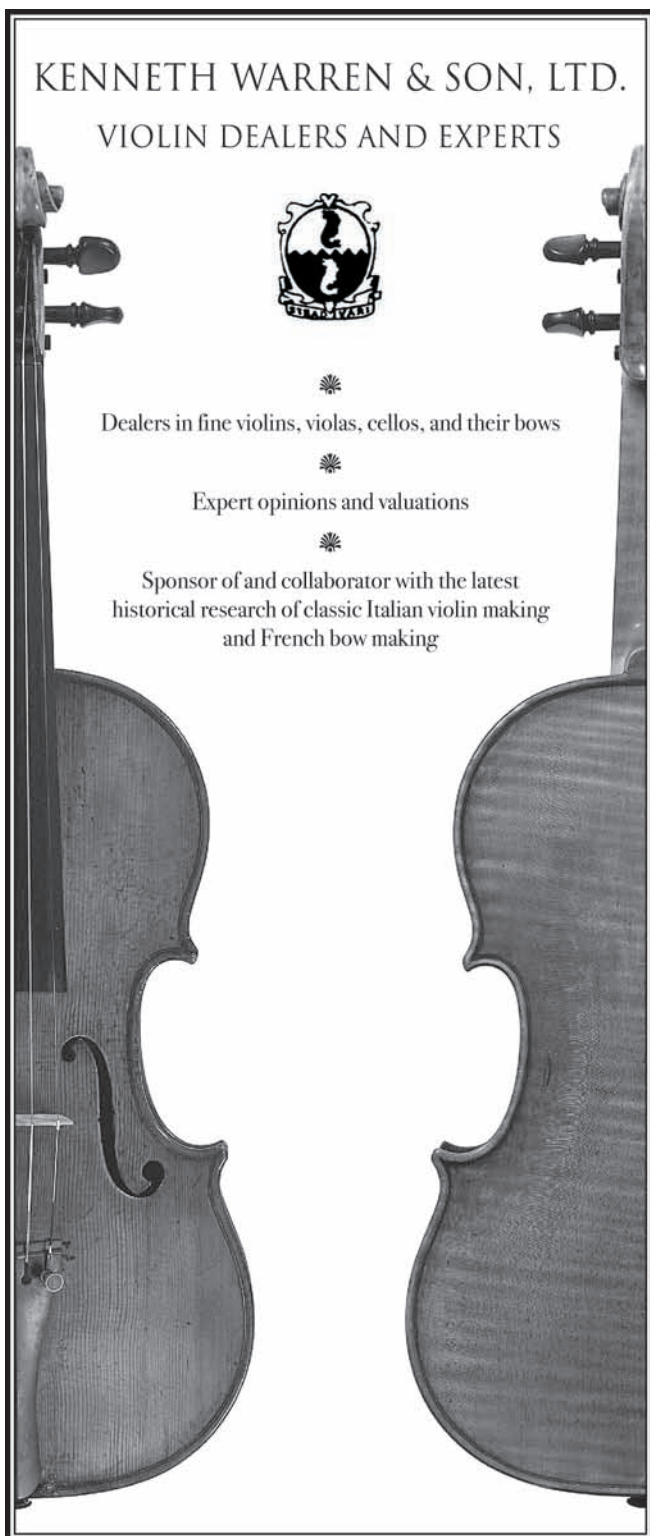
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LUTHIER
Stéphane Bodart
LOCATION
Paris, France

I HAVE BEEN BASED AT THIS workshop ever since I started as a luthier. It's situated about a mile south of the centre of Paris, in the 14th *arrondissement* – an area that was once a haven for artists. The building belonged to my grandfather, the sculptor Marcel Bodart, who moved here in 1947 and made renovations to turn it into an artist's studio. He installed large windows all around the sides and in the roof, to let in plenty of natural light. He was

influenced by the work of the Romanian sculptor Constantin Brâncuși and the animal sculptor François Pompon, and their influence can be seen a little in some of the animal and bird sculptures of my grandfather's that I have around the workshop and in the garden beyond.

The workshop is around 140 sq m: the picture shows only a small corner, although the reflection in the corner mirror gives an idea of the space. I share the room with my cousin, the bow maker Doriane Bodart, and it functions as a place where musicians can test their instruments too. There's also an upper floor where I do most of the varnishing work. I've just finished the cello situated on the left-hand side of the picture next to the walrus and heron. It's based on the 1740 Montagnana currently used by Steven Isserlis, which I've used before. Generally I use the same model for around ten instruments, adding my own tweaks and adjustments to each, such as the tension of the bass-bar, the arching, the angle of the neck, or the weight of the wood. Each time there are differences to the sound or the final look of the instrument, and of course I might change things depending on the

customer's requirements. On the wall there's a photograph of a cello back by Guarneri 'filius Andreae', which I chose for the beautiful flame of the maple.

THE MIRROR TO THE RIGHT of the cello is a permanent fixture: my grandfather thought it lent interest to the room, and it hides the sink behind it. In the reflection you can see the bench where I do most of the woodworking – it's in a dark part of the workshop, and I find that with electric light,

The workbench belonged to a violin maker who exchanged it for some French wines

I can see the curves of the arching more clearly. Right now I'm making the ribs for another cello based on

the Montagnana. Above the mirror is a black and white photograph of another of my grandfather's sculptures.

The workbench in the centre of the photograph comes from Cremona: I brought it here over 20 years ago. It belonged to a German violin maker who exchanged it for some French wines. It's where I do my fine work, such as the cello scroll I'm currently carving. The mandolin in the picture is not here for repairs: I'm working on it with my six-year-old son, who's just beginning to take an interest in my work. There are a number of drawers to the right, which I've labelled in Italian in memory of my time studying in Cremona. They contain soundposts, models of f-holes, sandpaper and various smaller tools, and below the bench is a wooden chest of drawers where I keep templates I've accumulated over the years. ■

INTERVIEW BY CHRISTIAN LLOYD

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Dittersdorf's Double Bass Concerto no.2 – first movement

Mastery of the bow, carefully planned fingerings and a resonant sound are the keys to performing this challenging piece

BY LEON BOSCH
DOUBLE BASSIST AND TEACHER

THE SECOND DOUBLE BASS CONCERTO by Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf (1739–1799), scored for solo double bass with an orchestra of two flutes, two horns and strings, is one of the most popular compositions for the instrument. Its arpeggio flourishes, fanfares of harmonics and virtuosic passagework render it both endearing and enduring, and it is these charming characteristics that attracted me to it in 1980, when I first performed it as a student at the University of Cape Town. The work brutally and effectively tests players' technical and musical virtuosity.

Dittersdorf was not just a prolific composer and an exceptional virtuoso violinist famed for playing quartets with Haydn, Mozart and Vanhal. He was also an accomplished conductor with an in-depth knowledge of the musical world. He wrote his concertos for double bass at a time when even cello concertos were rare, and his contribution to the still-developing Classical concerto form included numerous violin, viola, cello and wind concertos. He wrote the Second Double Bass Concerto in around 1767, for the Austrian double bassist Friedrich Pischelberger. Although we do not have Dittersdorf's own manuscripts, we do have a complete set of parts that belonged to Johannes Matthias Sperger, a German double bassist and composer rumoured to have played in Haydn's orchestra at Esterhazy. Sperger's own idiomatic cadenzas are included. From these we can see that originally it was conceived for a five-stringed instrument with Viennese tuning (F–A–D–F sharp–A).

The majority of bassists will play Dittersdorf's Second Concerto with their instrument tuned in 4ths. Because Viennese tuning enables an unprecedented level of resonance, especially when the hand is locked in position across the strings, we must find technical solutions to help us emulate this sound when we perform in 4ths. It is from this perspective that I make my recommendations in this article. But whether one employs Viennese tuning, conventional orchestral tuning in 4ths, or even rare tuning in 5ths, the challenge for any bassist is to perform Dittersdorf's concerto with the level of integrity, finesse and love that a violinist would accord a Mozart concerto.

CHOOSING YOUR EDITION

It is essential to find a reliable music edition that honours the composer's intentions. There are many dubious editions of the concerto masquerading as original, so always cross-reference your score with others: such comparisons can lead to unexpected insights. A Schott Music edition from 1938, for example, contains savage cuts. The 1978 Yorke edition, edited by Rodney Slatford, was the first to restore the concerto to something akin to the original, based on Sperger's parts; Henle Verlag has more recently published its own comprehensive

edition, providing a solo part for every eventuality including Viennese tuning.

It is tempting to label the Viennese copyist who transcribed Sperger's parts as careless – some accidentals and articulations are clearly omitted. This may, however, indicate assumed knowledge of performers regarding Classical taste and style at that time. In his autobiography, Dittersdorf mentions how his teacher, Francesco Trani, told him to 'study minutely the individual points of every artist, be he violinist, singer or instrumentalist, and when you have ascertained their various points of excellence, make them your own, not by slavish but by free imitation; above all, let your own feelings be your guide; then you will be an artist.' When it comes to articulations, both the Yorke and Henle Verlag editions make stylistically consistent recommendations, but imaginative and informed artistry should trump the literal approach. One of the main challenges of this concerto is to escape the orchestral 'straitjacket' and to find one's own voice. It also requires elegance, poise, delicate phrasing and clear articulation. ▶



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THROUGH COUNTLESS HOURS of practising Dittersdorf, as well as listening to and studying his other works, I have discovered that most of his Allegro moderato first movements, including this one, have an ideal tempo of around ♩ = 104. This gives even the most demanding passagework a satisfying level of poise. Anything slower is in danger of coming across as indulgent; anything swifter risks sounding hurried.

Having chosen an appropriate tempo, we have to find suitable fingerings to facilitate it. Although the choice of fingerings is a very personal matter, some methods are more suitable than others when we are faced with particular conceptual, musical or practical criteria. In Viennese tuning, the opening arpeggio flourish is accomplished exclusively with the use of open strings and harmonics, resulting in a resonant and arresting sound (**example 1a**). My choice of fingering when playing in 4ths tuning begins with an open string (**example 1b**). This requires minimal movement in terms of distance travelled and at the same time emulates some of the resonance of Viennese tuning. As the major 3rd and perfect 5th of D major, both the F sharps and the top As in the opening bar benefit from the resonance of the open D string and the mid-string D harmonic.

Any technical deficiencies relating to bow control will be exposed when playing this concerto. While learning it, spend some time on studies devoted to string-crossing and general bow discipline. Bow distribution is a particularly important factor when playing the tortuous opening arpeggio: every note demands an ideal bow quantity, contact point and angle, and a delicate balance between weight and speed. An effective right hand is the key to magical playing, so keeping all the ingredients in place at once, though challenging, is vital.

Avoid playing everything in the middle of the bow and in the same part of the string. Many double bassists use only the area midway between the end of the fingerboard and the bridge, which can lead to a one-dimensional sound. Deliberate exploitation of the upper and lower thirds of the bow with judicious

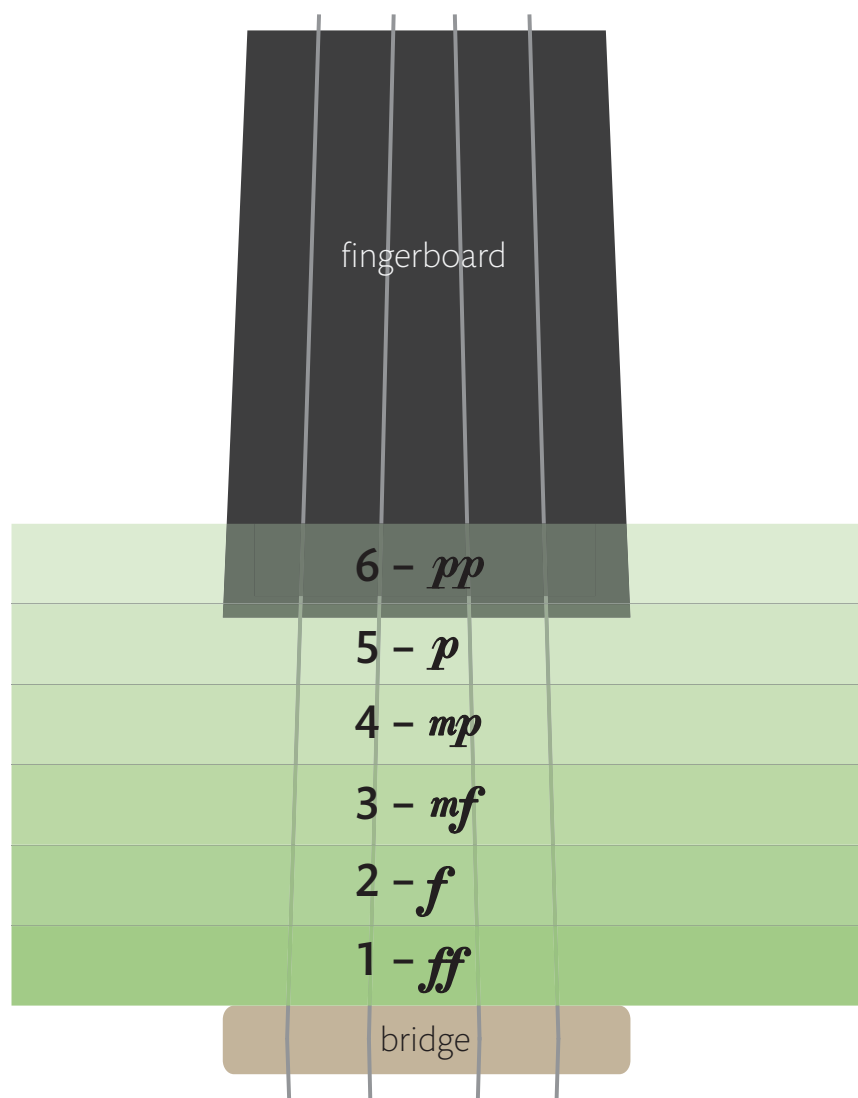


FIGURE 1 Six zones between the bridge and fingerboard, marking the ideal point of contact between the bow and the string when playing at different dynamics

use of different contact points on the string will improve instrumental command and help us to create a more complex palette of colour.

I use a system of zones, numbered 1–6, to denote bow contact points between the end of the fingerboard and the bridge (**figure 1**). These roughly correspond to the dynamic levels between *ff* and *pp*.

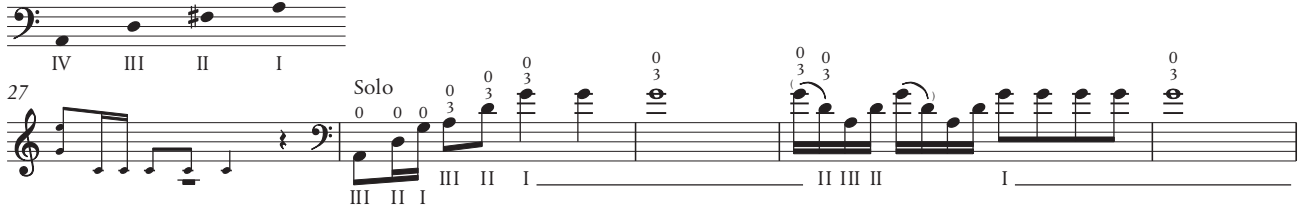
I begin the piece with a rapid, whole down bow in zone 2 (*f*), doing everything I can to make the open string resonate (**example 1c**). For the F sharp and A, I use the upper quarter of the bow. The F sharp is played on the third string, so it requires a greater amount of hand weight than might be the case with a different fingering. Applying weight in the upper quarter

of the bow with staccato articulation is vital if we are to maintain sufficient clarity. By the end of the first two semiquavers (♪), we will have retreated to zone 4 (*mp*) where the following D and F are played with one quarter of the bow, with increasing weight, as we move back into zone 3 (*mf*).

For both the crotchet (♩) As at the end of the bar, use up to half the bow to create a measured crescendo that peaks in zone 2 at the top of the phrase. This should be expressive and sensitive to the counter-melody in the violins, but also dynamic enough to allow the spirited execution of the semiquavers in the following bar. In this semiquaver passage, the first note requires a whole bow with less weight, allowing us to return quickly to the upper half of

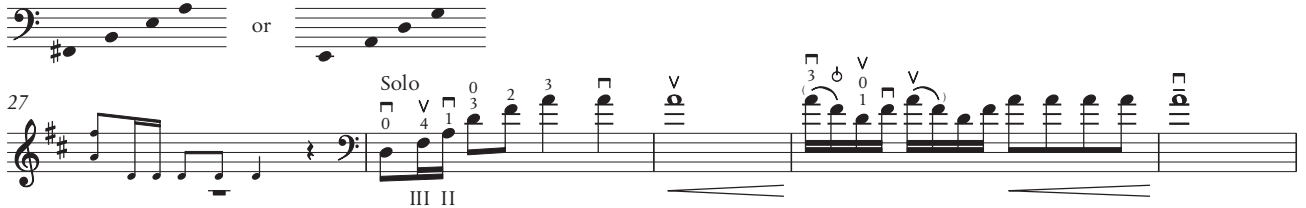
1a When playing with Viennese tuning, the opening notes are all on open strings, creating a resonant sound

Vienna Tuning



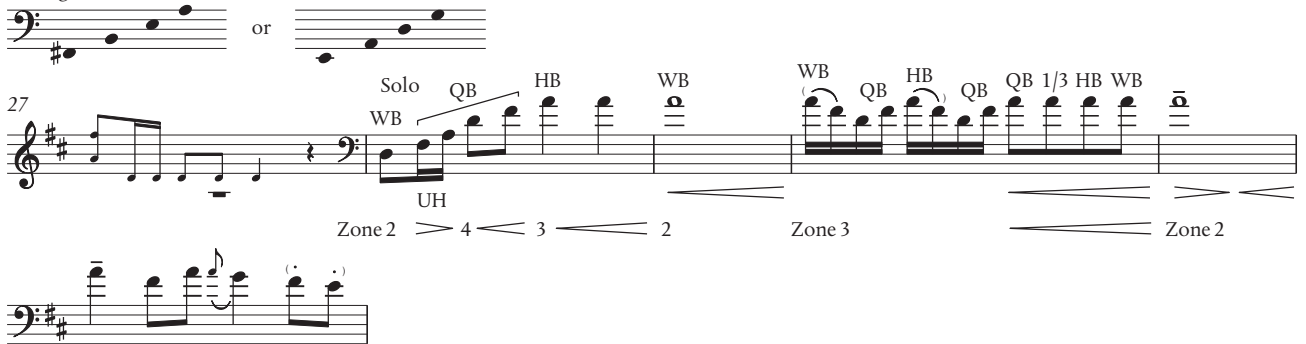
1b When playing an instrument tuned in 4ths, beginning on an open string helps to emulate the resonant effect of Viennese tuning

Tuning



1c Pay careful attention to bow distribution and contact points, using whole bows (WB), half bows (HB), third bows (1/3), quarter bows (QB) and playing in the upper half (UH) of the bow

Tuning



We must think about the essence, purpose and articulation of every note in relation to every other note, rhythmically, harmonically and dynamically

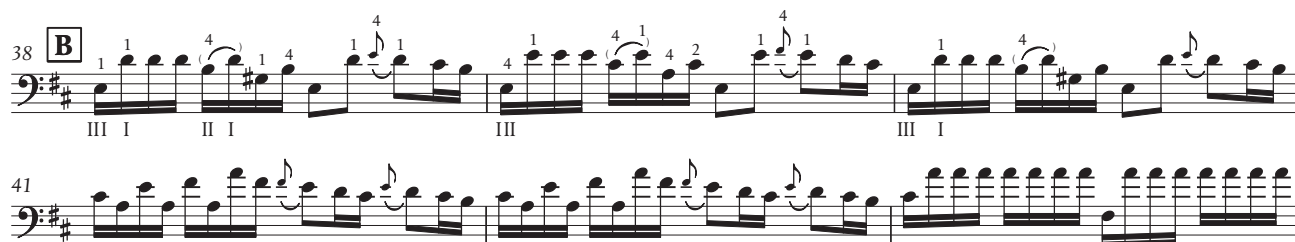
the bow and a zone 3 contact point. The remaining semiquavers should be played using a quarter bow for each of the separate notes and a half bow under the slur.

We now have four quavers (♪) to get us to the top of the phrase with the

semibreve (♩) A. Crescendo through these by giving each quaver more bow, starting on a quarter bow and finishing on a whole bow. Play the final semibreve A with a whole bow in zone 2, remaining sensitive to the violins' counter-melody.

In the semiquavers of the third bar of the solo, we should still aim for maximum resonance. Use light but firm first-finger contact to let the mid-string D harmonic ring as you play the F sharp and A. I use no more than a quarter bow for the separate semiquavers, but I give >

2 When choosing fingerings, aim for more string-crossings and fewer shifts, to minimise physical effort and increase resonance



3 Play these fanfares using natural harmonics and a quasi-martelé bow stroke, to imitate the sound of a hunting horn



a half bow to the two-semiquaver slurs, using a little more weight in my right hand to emphasise the articulation.

IN THE COMPLEX SEMIQUAVER passagework (**example 2**), I generally favour string-crossings rather than shifts. My fingerings minimise the physical distance travelled but maximise sympathetic resonances across the strings. There are, of course, several possibilities, depending on one's preferences and the size of one's left hand.

Dittersdorf's arresting fanfares in harmonics should sound something like a hunting horn (**example 3**). Natural harmonics are the best way to create this effect. I avoid artificial harmonics in all Classical repertoire: I cannot find any reference to their use in pedagogical materials from before the 20th century, and I do not think they sound as effective. To make the natural harmonics resonate and project, make sure your left hand is firmly placed in exactly the right position, and use a martelé-like bow stroke in zone 2. Dynamic nuances can be accomplished through the addition or subtraction of weight, a change of contact point, or by playing higher up or lower down in the bow. >



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4 Use the same technical solutions in the development section as you did at the beginning of the movement



5 In this challenging arpeggiated passage, find a fingering geared towards maximising resonance



In the development section (**example 4**), the technical solutions used in the exposition work equally well, although all the arpeggios and other passagework now appear in the dominant key. The rising arpeggio flourish, for example, can benefit from the same fingering as in the exposition, and it is equally effective to favour string-crossing in preference to shifting in the ensuing passagework.

The arpeggiated passages in the development section (excluded in the 1938 Schott edition) provide one of the sternest, if most satisfying, challenges of the first movement (**example 5**).

It is worth remembering that the resonant 18th-century Viennese bass sound was facilitated not only by tuning but also by the practice of clamping the left hand in position across the strings. This is not entirely possible in 4ths tuning, but devising a fingering to produce a similar effect is an option, although it is difficult.

The recapitulation should not be a perfunctory restatement of the exposition. Any experience in life shapes our future perspectives, and the return of the opening arpeggio flourish here ought to be approached with this in mind – as should the

familiar material we see as we head purposefully towards the cadenza. More than ever, we must think about the essence, purpose and articulation of every note in relation to every other note, rhythmically, harmonically and dynamically, to achieve our desired musical outcome.

DITTERSDORF, LAMENTING HOW soloists no longer extemporised in cadenzas, once said: 'It is positively sickening to listen to beardless boys, breaking their necks over things that none [other] than real masters should attempt...'. A salutary warning. It is fortunate that we have Sperger's cadenzas for this concerto: they provide a window into the thoughts and practices of the Classical era, and they are as important to learn and understand as the concerto itself.

In this movement, I choose to play Sperger's first cadenza (he wrote two). The real challenge, after this short but intense passage, is to hand the music back to the conductor and orchestra smoothly at the required tempo of $\text{♩} = 104$, ready for the closing ritornello. ■



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BY SIMON FISCHER

PROFESSOR AT THE GUILDHALL AND MENUHIN SCHOOLS

LACK OF DYNAMIC CONTRAST is one of the most common reasons why higher-level students lose marks in examinations. Without contrast, a musical performance is not compelling – it becomes monochrome, like Picasso's paintings of 1900–04, when the artist used mainly shades of blue and blue–green. His 'Blue Period' paintings eventually became popular, but for a musician performing the classics, such a period can never be successful. Dynamics and colour are two sides of the same coin. Once, while conducting a student orchestra rehearsal, cellist Mstislav Rostropovich complained that every passage sounded mezzo-forte – but in each case he couldn't tell whether it was a bad piano or a bad forte! One sure way to raise your performance to a new level is to make the different colours really telling.

DYNAMIC RANGE

What exactly do piano and forte mean? The great cellist Pablo Casals taught that the range of piano extends all the way from pianissimo up to near forte, and that forte extends from fortissimo down to near piano. Although these markings indicate the volume of passages relative to each other, they cannot give us precise sound levels in terms of decibels. Often you have to create an impression of piano while actually playing out, or appear to play strongly in forte when in fact you are holding back.

The greatest range of sound is possible in orchestral playing. Sometimes you have to play so quietly that you barely make any sound at all, or so strongly that the effect is almost rough – yet 32 violins playing that softly or forcefully create a tremendous overall tone. A far narrower range of possibility exists for soloists: it is very rare for a soloist to play so quietly that giving any less would mean not playing at all, or so loudly that their instrument seems to be suffering.

In the theatre, a stage whisper has to be loud enough for the audience in the back row to hear it. Similarly, while the opening of the Wieniawski D minor Concerto is marked *sotto voce* ('under the breath') – the soloist needs to play it reasonably near to the bridge to be heard clearly above the orchestra, and to aim more for the 'espressivo' than for the 'sotto voce'.



The trick to giving an impression of piano lies in smooth, unaccented bowing. Try playing the opening in two different ways: first play the phrase as if it were marked forte (as it is later in the piece), positioning the bow hair about a centimetre from the bridge. Use extra bow speed and weight to begin each stroke with an accent:

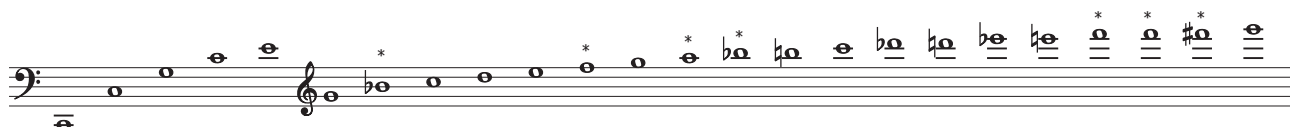


Now repeat the phrase at the same point of contact, but play without accents, joining each stroke seamlessly to the next. The volume will be more or less the same as it was when you played the accented version, but the character will be markedly different.

THE SOUND UNDER YOUR EAR

It can be difficult to get students to play nearer to the bridge. Often this is not because they forget to, nor because they are recalcitrant, but simply because they don't like the sound they create when they do play there. If this is the case, it is because they do not realise that the sound under their ear is different from the sound the audience hears. Of course, the sound is louder to the player and softer to the listener, but there is more to it than that. Each note is made up of the many notes of the harmonic series, called 'partials'. When you bow a string to make it vibrate, it is not only the string as a whole that vibrates to create the note you are playing: the string also vibrates in halves, thirds, quarters, fifths, and so on, across the harmonic series related to each note.

Below are the first 24 notes of the series based on the fundamental note of bottom C. The crosses indicate notes that are not exactly in tune within the series:

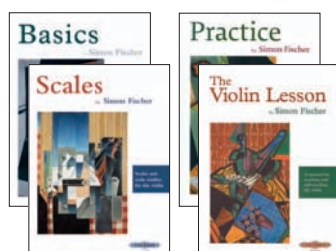


The closer to the bridge you play, the more upper partials are audible – just as playing further from the bridge, or using a mute, reduces their audibility. But the important point is that the higher the partials, the less well they travel. With your ear close to the instrument you can hear everything, but by the time your sound has reached the audience the upper partials have fallen away, making your tone sound mellower or sweeter. If you produce a sound that you like when the instrument is close to your ear, that sound may be small or weak by the time it reaches the audience. This is not to say that you should play roughly or harshly in the hope that nobody will notice: they certainly will. It is simply a matter of extending your dynamic range by using the area near the bridge more often.

PLAY IT AGAIN DIFFERENTLY

Itzhak Perlman often says to his students, after they have played a piece to him: 'Very good. Now play it again completely differently.' This is most liberating and Casals would have approved thoroughly: he used to practise every passage of a piece in six or more different ways, and he would only decide on the approach he was going to take during each concert. In this way every performance is fresh and new.

How exactly should the opening forte of Sarasate's *Zigeunerweisen* be interpreted? There are probably as many different ways to play it – all of them correct – as there are violinists: smoothly or accented; with more or less bow; nearer to or further from the bridge; at a faster or slower tempo (within the underlying pulse); and with infinite different combinations of vibrato speed and width. Of course, you can also try different levels or qualities of dynamics, from mezzo-forte with more accented strokes, to fortissimo with smoother strokes, either of which would result in a forte. ■



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HILLEL ZORI

The cello pedagogue, soloist and chamber musician discusses how to improve students' bow technique

Who do you teach?

As well as conservatoire students, I have several private students in their teens, many of whom will become my university students. In Israel, those who wish to be professional musicians must do pre-army auditions, to give them the military status of 'outstanding musician'. This allows them to serve as a musician in the army while doing limited studies at the university. We have to plan years ahead for this exam. It is a very sensitive time for them and I feel a lot of responsibility for their future.

The biggest challenge is to switch students' minds into professional mode. This means helping them to get to know the instrument better, making them more aware of each piece's structure and spirit. I tell them to play the way they would like any major artist to perform for them. Bowing is a common problem.

What are students' worst bowing faults?

Many cellists don't have a good grip on the string and cannot feel it properly through the bow. They may start in a good position, but the further away from the heel they go, the more the bow slides up towards the fingerboard – it only slides back into the right place when they go back towards the heel on the up bow. This produces an unstable sound and makes it difficult to change dynamics without altering the sound quality: when you move towards the bridge you can get a harsh sound, and on the fingerboard you have a delicate, sometimes unfocused sound. We have to know what to listen for, and how to react.

How can they make a consistent sound?

They have to adjust the weight of the arm while keeping the bow on the same course, like a carpenter cutting a piece of wood: to cut on one course, gently at first, and then to create a stable motion back and forth without using too much

pressure. If you pull the saw at a different angle, it will get stuck. It is the same on a stringed instrument: you have to be on top of the sound, with a balanced bow, making use of the natural weight of the hand. The further towards the tip you go, the less natural weight you have and the weaker the bow becomes. You constantly have to alter your hand position so that it weighs into the contact point of the bow and the string as the bow moves. This way you can control the sound quality at the tip.

What exercises do you use to help?

I get students to play a scale, repeating each note twice. They begin by playing piano near the frog, and they crescendo all the way to the tip of the bow, then they diminuendo on the up bow. They have to watch and listen at the same time, to check their position is correct.

First we practise the exercise together; then we apply it to some music – often something easy for the left hand so that they can focus on controlling the bow. Let's say a student is starting Saint-Saëns's Concerto no.1, which opens with an E followed by triplets. On the opening E, they throw the bow and get a strong sound, but the following D won't have

It is limiting to practise using only technical ideas

enough sound because the bow is at the tip and on the fingerboard. I get them to play the E slowly, and then to play the D along the same course, as though the bow were a train travelling along a railway. If they fall off the track, they will lose their consistency of sound.

In Paganini's Moto Perpetuo, I make students practise slowly in fortissimo, using small bows with a good attack. It sounds harsh at this speed, but it trains



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the hand to do the right thing when the music is played in tempo.

What other repertoire do you use?

Many pieces are wonderful for the soul, not too difficult for the left hand and help with rhythm and bow distribution. One piece I love teaching is Bloch's *Schelomo*. Another is the Lalo Concerto.

In the Lalo, the time signature is 12/8, divided into four 3/8s or three 4/8s. Semiquaver up-beats force you to imagine 24/16 in a bar. You have to play every note in time and plan the bow accordingly. Where three notes in a slur are followed by one separate note, all four should have the same value. Often the fourth will get an unwanted kick, so you need to control this by thinking about how much bow to use, how much pressure, and how close to the bridge or the fingerboard it should be.

It is limiting to practise using technical ideas only. It requires a lot of maturity to understand that, and to practise in the right way using musical ideas as a guide. If you give your students a great piece of music that is not too hard, they can play it properly. This helps them to build a solid technique and also boosts their self-confidence, so that they feel more able to tackle the next piece you give them. ■

INTERVIEW BY PAULINE HARDING

REVIEWS

CONCERTS THIS PAGE / CDS 95 / BOOKS 108

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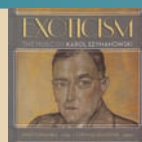
Our pick of the new releases



Raphael Wallfisch resurrects forgotten gems
page 96



The Tinalley Quartet explores Haydn's op.20
page 99



Jerzy Kaplanek enjoys Szymanowski's luxuriance
page 103

CONCERTS

NEW YORK

Gil Morgenstern (violin) J.Y. Song (piano) Yousif Sheronick (percussion) Elizabeth Marvel, Bill Camp (actors)

THE AVENUES SCHOOL 15 MAY

Violinist Gil Morgenstern presented a unique and compelling programme, tracing the idea of identity through music and spoken word from the beginning of time. Beginning with the Andante assai from Prokofiev's F minor Sonata, he led the audience on an imaginative and thought-provoking journey. He incorporated the

Prokofiev Sonata in its entirety, movement by movement, dotted throughout the programme, and his performance of it was compelling, although the Allegro brusco was perhaps a bit docile and could have benefited from a more aggressive opening followed by a deeper tenderness in and enjoyment of the subsequent melodies.

Morgenstern performed Gabriela Lena Frank's *Marinera* with energy, accuracy and a strong sense of commitment, although occasionally some of the violin lines were overwhelmed by J.Y. Song's piano. John Cage's *Nocturne* was absolutely exquisite and the world premiere of Bruce Saylor's *Adagio espressivo* was powerful and intense. Overall, the evening might have had a

greater musical variety, but anything that the technical performance lacked in finesse or artistic depth, Morgenstern more than made up for in his authenticity and thoughtful programming.

LEAH SWANN HOLLINGSWORTH

Yura Lee (violin/viola) Richard O'Neill (viola) Paul Watkins (cello) Huw Watkins (piano)

KAPLAN PENTHOUSE 22 MAY

Paul Watkins, who became the Emerson Quartet's cellist in May 2013, seems to light up everything he touches. As part of Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's 'New Music in the Kaplan Penthouse', he wound his way luxuriously through the US premiere of *Blue Shadows Fall* (2014), written by his brother Huw, who offered agile counterpoint on the piano.

Violinist Yura Lee temporarily adopted another instrument for George Benjamin's *Viola, Viola* (1987), a brief, feverish fantasia characterised by short outbursts, and now and then, what sounds like the makings of a country dance. Lee and violist Richard O'Neill played with verve and imagination. Lee and the Watkins brothers found delicacy in Helen Grime's *Three Whistler Miniatures* (2011), and she and Huw melded together for Oliver Knussen's impassioned *Autumnal*, packed with lazily unfolding double-stops.

Perhaps the best came last: in Schnittke's 1985 Trio the three string players were riveting in their focus, whether nestled together in anguished cluster-chords or delivering the tattered remnants of a sad, stately Baroque motif. The group's meticulous attention to intonation



Gil Morgenstern: compelling Prokofiev

SNAP HAPPY PHOTOS

and dynamic levels contributed to a wrenching impression that was hard to shake off, even hours later.

BRUCE HODGES

Mark Peskanov (violin)
Ursula Oppens (piano)

BARGEMUSIC 4 JUNE

How Bargemusic's affable proprietor Mark Peskanov makes time for his own recitals amid the hundreds of details of managing this venue is a wonder. He made a strong opening in Brahms's Sonata Movement in C minor WoO2 with his rosy tone penetrating strongly (he plays a 1737 Carlo Bergonzi) and pianist Ursula Oppens matching him in ferocity and rhythmic accuracy. In Beethoven's Sonata op.30 no.2, Peskanov found humour in the martial motif that threads its way through the opening Allegro con brio, and at the movement's end his bravura inspired more than a little audience applause. The second movement was one of the evening's high points, combining passion with the simplicity of a Schubert song, and all with astute control of dynamics. The final double-stopped chord was a model of evenness and control.

After the interval, Strauss's Sonata op.18 was dotted with a few precarious intonation issues, but those anxieties were offset by the violinist's ingratiating tonal warmth and expressive phrasing. In the middle movement, Peskanov and Oppens masterfully spun out the composer's rapturous lines, with the muted interlude especially intimate and embracing. Three vigorous curtain calls only confirmed the duo's magnetism.

BRUCE HODGES

Tetraktys Quartet, Dionysis Grammenos (clarinet)

ZANKEL HALL 5 JUNE

Greek accents popped up like wild flowers in the huge audience for this concert by the Tetraktys Quartet, presented under the auspices of the Onassis Cultural Center of New York. Doing one of their countrymen proud, the exuberant foursome found rhythmic zest in Nikos Skalkottas's *Ten Sketches for String Quartet* (1940). Highlights were the angular no.7, which ends as if suddenly cut off in mid-thought, and no.9, like a prestissimo scattering of mice.



Ingratiating tonal warmth from Mark Peskanov

Shostakovich's Third Quartet also drew some of the night's most committed playing. The Haydnesque initial movement drew commensurately feather-light playing. A few tuning issues in the furious third movement ('Forces of war unleashed') didn't detract from the violent, shrieking result. And after the final movement, in which the composer's title asks, 'Why? And for what?', a sad, painful afterglow hovered in the air before the audience began shouting its approval.

After the interval, clarinetist Dionysis Grammenos joined the group for a richly satisfying Brahms Clarinet Quintet, with a particularly detailed and carefully conceived slow movement. Four excerpts from Bach's *Art of Fugue* opened the evening, each of the musicians making intelligent choices in use (or not) of vibrato. An energetic encore was as deliciously peppy as the Brahms was reflective.

BRUCE HODGES

Alisa Weilerstein (cello), New York Philharmonic/Matthias Pintscher

AVERY FISHER HALL 6 JUNE

In comments before this concert, composer-conductor Matthias Pintscher revealed that cellist Alisa Weilerstein has commissioned him to write a second concerto for her, to be premiered in two years in Boston. It is not hard to see why, following this vivid reading of the first, *Reflections on Narcissus* (2004–5), with Pintscher and the New York Philharmonic, part of the orchestra's first-ever Biennial.

Pintscher treats the soloist as another voice in the ensemble – this was very much in evidence in the first few minutes, when Weilerstein seemed to be working hard, but she wasn't as audible as she was later in the score. Whether at the upper end of the fingerboard in sustained notes, or zigzagging amid the composer's delicate use of percussion, she eventually emerged from the mix. Late in the piece came a 'cello-off' sequence in which she interacted with principal cellist Carter Brey, as the ensemble erupted all around them. Near the end, Weilerstein had another long solo, groaning with resonance and flecked with percussion, and the piece ended quietly.

Pintscher began the concert with a vibrant new piece, Andrew McManus's *Strobe* (2014), followed by an incisive reading of Elliott Carter's final work for orchestra, *Instances* (2012).

BRUCE HODGES



Exuberant: the Tetraktys Quartet

ETIENNE PROSSARD

GIORGOS MANIPOULOS

LONDON

Y-Squared: Yelian He (cello) Yasmin Rowe (piano)

WIGMORE HALL 25 MAY

Although full of melodic distinction, Poulenc's Cello Sonata is a notoriously difficult work to bring off in the concert hall. Its cinematic technique, which juxtaposes very different moods within a short space of time, needs a sense of connection – something that the Y-Squared duo missed in a performance that was rather bitty. Equally, Beethoven's 'Judas Maccabaeus' Variations were a little under-dramatised.

Despite some impressive moments, the playing required a wider range of colour and emotion with a more

tangible dialogue between the cello and piano. Following the interval, though, both players were far more persuasive musically. Kapustin's *Burlesque* is great fun, offering a sophisticated assimilation of jazz features. The writing is complex, however, and possibly requires a slightly slower tempo for this to be fully digested by the audience. Mendelssohn's D major Sonata was totally convincing, the Adagio in particular being beautifully lyrical. A light and well-defined opening characterised the scherzo, and the finale was both exciting and technically flawless. Martinů's witty *Rossini Variations* are a great vehicle for virtuosic display and Yelian He showed he was a consummate master of the bow. This performance truly sparkled, and He's encore of Popper's *Elfentanz* confirmed his awesome technical skill.

JOANNE TALBOT



MARCO BORGREVE

Veronika Eberle (violin) London Symphony Orchestra/Simon Rattle

BARBICAN HALL 1 JUNE

With Simon Rattle being tipped to succeed Valery Gergiev at the London Symphony Orchestra after 2017, his first appearance with the ensemble since the 2012 Olympic opening ceremony drew a palpable sense of anticipation. Under his direction the orchestra was sharply focused in Schumann's Second Symphony (replacing the advertised Brahms Fourth) – particularly in the

Veronika Eberle's Beethoven is already thoughtfully conceived

brilliance and wit of the second-movement scherzo. By contrast, the pared-down scoring of Henze's Rimbaud setting *Being Beateous* (for soprano, four cellos and harp) allowed individual players to shine.

Veronika Eberle is only 25 but her Beethoven Violin Concerto is already thoughtfully conceived. She may have sounded hesitant at first, but even from the start she seemed to take a deliberately introspective view of the work. Some of the pulling around sounded artificial, and occasionally she dropped the dynamic practically to inaudibility. To the extent that this was not a safe, conventional performance (she even played the less common Kreisler cadenzas), and given that it was sincerely conveyed, this was an illuminating, though not transformative, performance. And with Rattle clearly happy to linger on points of detail, too, this might be a sign of things to come, should he be drawn to London – not a bid to achieve definitive performances, but rather to exist as a live wire, driven by continuing fascination.

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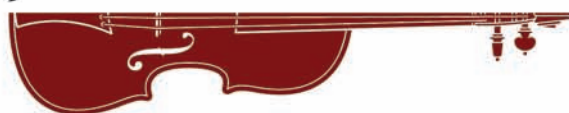
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Endellion Quartet, Benjamin Grosvenor (piano)

QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL 10 JUNE

The Endellion Quartet opened this concert with a spirited account of Haydn's G major Quartet op.76 no.1. The first movement was ebullient, and the Adagio sostenuto second movement was similarly full of life, pulsing and forward-moving. The minuet was sheer fun, the leader Andrew Watkinson enjoyed himself in the dancing trio, and Rossini seemed to peep out from the finale.

In Britten's First String Quartet there was the same sense of propulsion and urgency. The first movement featured fine playing from cellist David Waterman. After some particularly vehement playing in the Allegretto con slancio second movement, violist Garfield Jackson shone in the gentle Andante calmo. The finale was a nice mix of energy, lightness, effervescence and power. It all amounted to a terrific performance.

For Brahms's Piano Quintet the quartet was joined by pianist Benjamin Grosvenor. He paid very close attention to Waterman at the opening without quite managing to get together, but before long, all the players were all in sync. The second movement acquired a great amount of cumulative power over its long span, and the third movement had tremendous drive. The final movement moved from tragedy into dynamism.

TIM HOMFRAY

London International Players

ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE 11 JUNE

This was the first of three Strauss-anniversary concerts planned by the London International Players, a flexible chamber ensemble with members drawn from the Menuhin School and IMS Prussia Cove summer music seminar. In Strauss's *Metamorphosen* (arranged by Rudolf Leopold for string septet), the players were subdued at first and, even though they produced a plush sound, the peaks and troughs – which, in some performances can admittedly induce motion sickness – were rather flattened out.

Helen Sherman was the rich-toned mezzo-soprano in Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder* (Leopold's arrangement for sextet accompaniment), with the strings depicting an idyllic celestial ascent in 'Der Engel', a warm embrace at the end of 'Stehe still!' and sumptuous dark sighing in 'Im Triebhaus'.

The emotional intensity of Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* came fully to bear in the ensemble's performance of its sextet version, after setting the scene in a trembling, hesitant moonlit wood. Throughout there was a palpable sense of communion and spontaneity across the various ensemble groupings, and an unmistakable passion in for playing together. This was also clear in *Till Eulenspiegel einmal anders!*, Franz Hasenöhr's ingenious distillation of Strauss's tone poem, which was rendered in vivid colours, brilliantly paced and combining striking individual virtuosity with chamber-like collegiality.

EDWARD BHESANIA

Interpreti Veneziani

ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE 14 JUNE

The Italian chamber ensemble Interpreti Veneziani played Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* at St John's Smith Square on this evening. And according to its website they were also performing it in their home church in Venice, so presumably this is a pool of players. Who these ones were was unknown, as there was no printed programme, but a subsequent email revealed that the violinists sharing the honours were Sebastiano Maria Vianello and Giacobbe Stevanato. Given how well one assumes they know the work, it was odd that Stevanato was playing 'Autumn' and 'Winter' (which started with some strange howling noises) from the music. They were very good indeed, full of energy and contrast, drama and precision. Almost too good, in fact: it sounded drilled to perfection, but a little short of spontaneity.

More Vivaldi followed. His *Sinfonia* for strings and harpsichord RV127 was briskly dispatched, before violinist Nicola Granillo and cellist Davide Amadio took the stand for the Concerto for violin, cello and harpsichord RV546, which came across as good fun. Amadio was the soloist in Marais's *Folies d'Espagne*, an energetic performance with the sense of spontaneity that had been missing earlier. Finally, Granillo returned to rattle off Sarasate's *Introduzione e Tarantella* with flair and apparent nonchalance.

TIM HOMFRAY



London International Players: a palpable sense of communion

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CDS

MUSIQUE ROMANTIQUE

ARENKY Quartet in A minor op.35 for violin, viola & two cellos **SAUTER** Musique romantique for solo cello & string trio **TCHAIKOVSKY** Andante cantabile for solo cello & string trio **Ten Hagen Quartet, Matthias Bartolomey (cello)** ARS 38 142

A satisfying programme of cello-led string works



This well-thought-out and original CD has satisfying symmetry to it. Arensky's Quartet, its middle movement a set of variations on Tchaikovsky's 'When Jesus Christ was but a child', is paired with a three-movement quartet by German composer Ernest Sauter (1928–2013), written for Arensky's centenary, and using one of the Russian's own children's songs as the theme for its central variations movement.

The young German performers create a gentle, burnished sound at the opening of the Arensky, the two cellos enhancing the sombre quality of the orthodox chant. This is a delightfully fresh and fluid interpretation of the quartet, with the players especially revelling in the myriad textures of the second movement.

With impressive family fairness (the quartet members are all siblings) the first violin chair passes from Kathrin Ten Hagen to younger sister Leonie for the remaining works. In Sauter's expressionistic *Musique romantique*, Matthias Bartolomey's solo cello is often subsumed within the quartet

texture, but also emerges for a sonorous, double-stopped cadenza. The players throw themselves into this intricately crafted piece, attacking its polyrhythmic textures and expressive dissonances with energy, and tenderly cherishing Arensky's lullaby in the second movement.

Tchaikovsky's *Andante cantabile* brings this exceptionally well-recorded disc to a beautifully soothing close.

JANET BANKS

BACH Solo Violin Sonatas no.2 in A minor BWV1003 & no.3 in C major BWV1005 **TARTINI** 'Devil's Trill' Sonata (arr. Kreisler) **MOZART** Violin Sonata in A major K526 **Christian Ferras (violin)** **Pierre Barbizet (piano)** MELOCLASSIC MC 2001 (WWW.MELOCLASSIC.COM)

Fervent performances unearthed after over a half a century



A disc of Christian Ferras (1933–82) on the Meloclassic label devoted to unissued concert and broadcast performances by historical artists (in this case well recorded for Hesse Radio in Germany between 1956 and 1960) features towering interpretations of unaccompanied Bach. Vibrato is often high-octane and the implacably imposing A minor Fugue and Allegro allow for little light and shade. Still, the edifices of sound Ferras achieves are often glorious and the slow movements

nearly ache with his acute sensitivity. The C major Sonata is on a higher plane, the poignancy of the Adagio and the vitality of the Fugue's voices evocative of Bach's Passions. One may well dispute aspects of style, but this is Bach in flesh and blood – profoundly humane and stirring stuff.

The Mozart Sonata is more tempered, both vigorous and elegant, with ever-vivid interaction between Ferras and his marvellous partner Pierre Barbizet, and just a hint of pathos in lyrical phrases. The jewel in the disc's crown is the stupendous account of the 'Devil's Trill' Sonata, brimming with skill and imagination. Ferras's unique blend of refinement and demonic intensity is at its apex, and Barbizet's support is superb.

Meloclassic boasts a rich and growing catalogue of exceptional interest. Recent releases include great performances by Henry Merkel, Michèle Auclair, René Benedetti and many other, often-forgotten artists. I urge readers to discover them.

NATHANIEL VALLOIS

BARTÓK Chamber works for violin vol.3: Contrasts¹, Sonatina (arr. Gertler)², 44 Duos³ **James Ehnes¹⁻³, Amy Schwartz Moretti³ (violin)** **Michael Collins¹ (clarinet)** **Andrew Armstrong^{1,2} (piano)** CHANDOS CHAN 10820

James Ehnes continues to dazzle in his Bartók series



This third volume of James Ehnes's survey of Bartók's violin music opens with a performance of *Contrasts* marked by wonderful shaping, particularly in the silky

contours of the first movement. The finale is at once precise and infused with devil-may-care exhilaration as the players chase each other's tails, and Ehnes's cadenza pulses with energy. The short Sonatina, arranged by André Gertler from the piano original, is elegant and fun.

The 44 Duos are treated with loving care. In the earlier, technically easier ones, the playing is suitably simple, with beautiful but understated sculpting of phrases. Further in, the 'Cradle Song', a melancholy lullaby with two unorthodox key signatures, has a more marked emotional edge.

As Ehnes and Moretti progress through what is almost a catalogue of Eastern European folk-music styles, the playing is respectful, refined and faithful to every last detail, although the earthiness of its rustic roots is not always in evidence. Some of them, such as the 'Pillow Dance' and the 'Jeering Song', are rather po-faced. But there is captivating, ethereal beauty in the first 'New Year's Greeting' (no.21) and great depth of feeling in 'Sorrow'. The energy levels increase with the complexity of the music: the fourth 'New Year's Greeting' (no.31) is satisfyingly robust, and the various regional dances – Ruthenian, Romanian, Serbian and Wallachian – snap and fizz. The recorded sound is full, with excellent balance.

TIM HOMFRAY

LOVE – INNOCENCE, PASSION, OBSESSION

FRANCK Violin Sonata in A major **PIAZZOLLA** Milonga in D major **PEPA** Fantaisie bohémienne **ROTA** Improvisio in D minor **FROLOV** Concert Fantasy on Themes from Gershwin's 'Porgy and Bess' op.19 **Lynn Kuo (violin)** **Marianna Humetska (piano)** LKCD 0001

An unusual but enjoyable recital from a Toronto-based violinist



This may be an oddly mixed collection, with Franck's Romantic juggernaut, the Violin Sonata, joining slighter works of the past 50 years by Piazzolla, Rota and others, but it's a rewarding listen overall.

Assistant concertmaster of the National Ballet of Canada Orchestra and leader of the ensemble Les AMIS, Lynn Kuo begins with the Franck, striking a measured but convincing mood in the first movement. She has a natural way of sustaining a note across its entire length – even at the quietest end of the spectrum, as she

Lynn Kuo strikes a measured but convincing mood

displays vividly at the end of the third movement, which fades seamlessly into nothing. Sometimes, though, you wish for more reserves of power, and the finale could certainly take more exuberance. She is perhaps not helped by Marianna Humetska's piano being a touch too present in the mix, making a notoriously note-filled accompaniment (though well played here) occasionally fatiguing on the ear.

Canadian composer Michael Pepa's *Fantaisie bohémienne* of 2004 deftly combines folk material with a sometimes post-tonal idiom and Kuo is a passionate advocate. In the sparser-textured *Improvisio* by Nino Rota we're back into the Romantic territory. The other highlight, along with the Pepa, is Frolov's *Porgy and Bess Fantasy*, with both musicians yielding naturally to the jazz idiom. Close your eyes and you can almost hear the clinking glasses through the cocktail-bar conversation.

EDWARD BHESANIA



Utterly arresting:
Raphael Wallfisch

the Strad
RECOMMENDS...



BRITISH MUSIC FOR CELLO AND PIANO

W. BUSCH Suite for cello & piano **LEIGHTON** Partita op.35 **WORDSWORTH** Cello Sonata no.2 **COOKE** Cello Sonata no.2
Raphael Wallfisch (cello)
Raphael Terroni (piano)
NAXOS 8.571352

Valuable rediscoveries from the more conservative school of British composition



It seems clear from the booklet notes that the composers featured on this enterprising and clearly recorded release were far too reticent

in promoting their work, particularly at a time when much tonal music was regarded as old hat. Another problem for William Busch (1901–45) and William Wordsworth (1908–88) was that their pacifism during the Second World War left them, unlike their similarly inclined contemporaries Britten and Tippett, regarded as outsiders relegated to the sidelines of music history.

Whether such judgements are fair, there's little doubt that each composer pursues a distinctive path. Undoubtedly Arnold Cooke is the most contrapuntally fluent, his allegiance to Hindemith strongly reflected in this Cello Sonata. Busch offers a more strikingly individual style, with some elegant writing that has character and definition. Likewise, Leighton's Partita is well constructed and has motivic bite. Its variations are particularly skilful and

offer a wide range of material from the furious Appassionato to the more reflective concluding chorale.

Raphael Wallfisch is exactly the right cellist to bring this repertoire to a wider audience. Both he and Raphael Terroni bring fantastic energy and sharply etched phrase

Raphael Wallfisch is the right cellist to bring this repertoire to a wider audience

characterisation to their performances, which are arresting in their intensity, especially in the faster movements of the Busch. Although I can't see these works gaining a foothold in the repertoire, Wallfisch's searing renditions have brought them into the most favourable light possible.

JOANNE TALBOT

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no.1 in E flat major, no.3 in
G minor & no.4 in D major

Tinalley Quartet

MOVE MD 3374

**Refreshing accounts of
early Haydn from a prize-
winning ensemble**



This recording opportunity formed part of the Australian Tinalley Quartet's first prize in the ninth International Banff String Quartet Competition (2007). For various reasons the end product, captured in 2011, has taken an age to reach the catalogue, but the wait has been worthwhile.

These performances are technically assured, warm-toned, beautifully blended and ideally balanced. The Tinalley's approach to articulation

Tinalley Quartet:
control and
cohesiveness



is especially striking: the players separate some notes that are normally syncopated in the finale of no.1 and ignore much 'traditional' slurring. They characterise Haydn's differing moods with sharp insights (especially in the cheeky finale of no.4), relish his developing dramatic language, occasionally add ornamentation in repeats, and make telling use of silence

as an expressive device (finale of no.3). They draw full value from his digressions to remote keys and his excursion into folk music (in no.4's extrovert Menuetto alla zingarese) and communicate detail vividly, yet bring to the music breadth, control and cohesiveness (as in the Affettuoso of no.1).

Closely recorded in an intimate ambience – but with

first violinist Adam Chalabi's distracting sniffing clearly audible – these readings should demand attention, but they enter a crowded market. The Mosaïques Quartet, for example, arguably probes even more deeply below the music's surface. A promising debut disc, nonetheless.

ROBIN STOWELL

GRUNDMAN A mortuis
resurgere (The Resurrection
of Christ)

**Brodsky Quartet,
Susana Cordon (soprano)**

CHANDOS CHAN CHSA 5138

**Neither work nor
performance make
a convincing case
for themselves**



A little of Jorge Grundman's *The Resurrection of Christ* goes a long way, at least on this disc.

Based on St John's Gospel, it is a chamber oratorio for soprano and string quartet designed as a companion piece to Haydn's *Seven Last Words* – picking up from the Crucifixion and leading to the Resurrection.

Grundman's background spans an early career in pop groups, studies in music, computing and sound engineering, and compositions taking in New Age electronica and music for film and TV – but his creative ethos is now simply 'to tell stories through the music narrative' and to do this by simple means. The means are certainly simple here: the harmonic plan is basic and repetitive, overlaid with endlessly recurring motifs and indulgent vocalises, presenting very

**There's little here
to test the players
technically**

little dramatic shape – so that the Credo and the concluding Hosanna are largely coloured with the same generic brush.

There's little here to test the Brodsky Quartet technically, yet the players do not sound at one with the music, as if hesitant to give it the full radiance and tonal sweetness that might make it more convincing. Capable as the recorded sound is, this is a piece designed for a cathedral acoustic and setting – listening to this studio-like rendering, it's hard to remain engaged for long.

EDWARD BHESANIA

LALO Piano Trio, Piano
Quintet, Violin Sonata,
Guitare, Chanson villageoise,
Sérénade, Arlequin

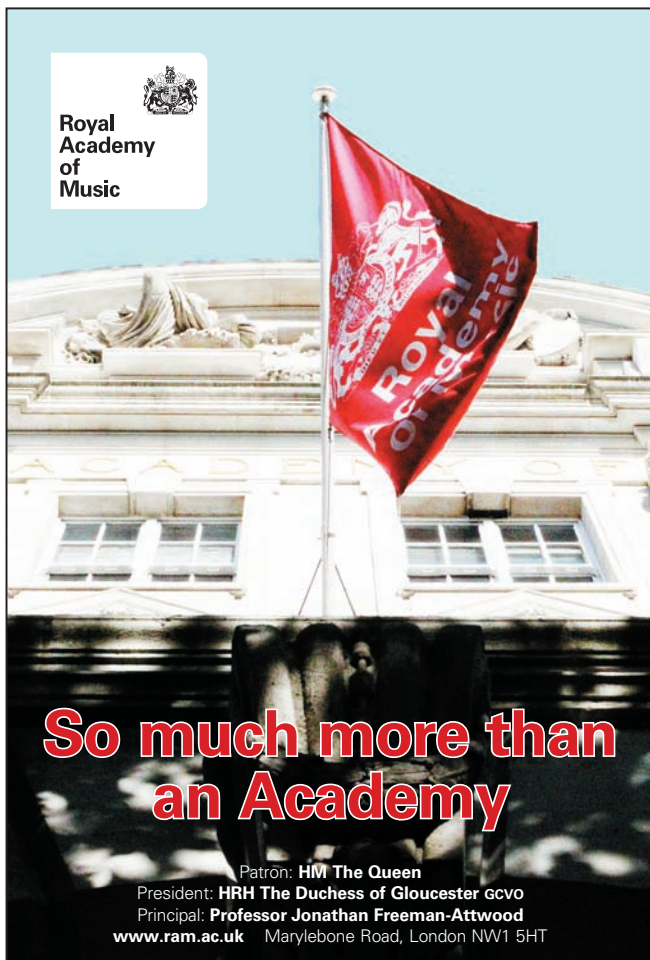
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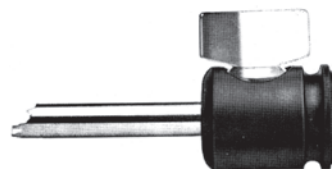
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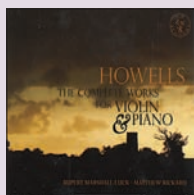
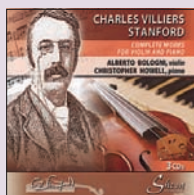
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TEACHER AND PUPIL

David Denton reviews new sets of violin repertoire by Charles Villiers Stanford and Herbert Howells

PLACED IN THE CONTEXT of Stanford's prolific output, his music for violin and piano was modest, and can be readily accommodated within the three discs of a new Italian release (Sheva Collection Sh100). Predominately salon pieces within the capability of amateur musicians, they were grouped together as Irish Airs, Dances, Sketches, Marches and Fantasies. No doubt intended for sale in the flourishing sheet-music market, they are here receiving their debut on disc from the Italian violinist **Alberto Bogni**.

His silvery tone is ideal, though I guess the Irish musical dialect and rhythmic inflections may elude most violinists without Celtic blood flowing through their veins. Together with his English pianist Christopher Howell, he is in more familiar territory in the two substantial sonatas, and if the First follows in Schumann's lineage, the recently discovered Second owes everything to Brahms. Bogni's playing in both has a pleasing songful intimacy in a rather close-up sound perspective, and he is equally

persuasive in the Three Intermezzi, Five Bagatelles and Five Characteristic Pieces that make up most of the remaining tracks.

Bogni's playing has a pleasing songful intimacy in a rather close-up sound perspective

Howell's copious booklet notes are a model of scholarly research.

By a strange coincidence we also have a new release of the entire music for violin and piano by Stanford's pupil Herbert Howells, whose First Sonata was completed when he was just 18 (EM Records EMR CD 019–20). It was the most ambitious part of a portfolio of scores he submitted in order to gain a foundation scholarship to study at London's Royal College of Music. At over 40 minutes in length, it embraces sweeping Elgarian gestures that lend themselves to the warm and generous tonal

EM MARSHALL-LUCK



Rupert Marshall-Luck: warm and generous tone

quality of the violinist **Rupert Marshall-Luck**, whose account glows with fervour in the outer movements of this world premiere recording.

Six years later a pair of sonatas found Howells writing in a much more concise mood, and with an added element of fantasy. Marshall-Luck here displays an admirable balance between flexibility and a purposeful adherence to the printed scores. (These two works,

together with the Third Sonata, a work characterised by a restless undercurrent, have already appeared on Hyperion played by Paul Barritt and Catherine Edwards, and I find their less intense approach equally persuasive.) This new release is completed by the Three Pieces for violin and four shorter 'encores'. The piano focus for the admirable Matthew Rickard could have been sharper and less hollow in quality.

This disc interlaces serious works such as the experimental two-movement Piano Quintet of 1862–3 (reconstructed by Dorian Lamotte and here receiving a first recording)

with lighter 'character' pieces, including 'Guitare' and the virtuosic 'Arlequin'. In the process it displays Lalo's eclecticism, from the Germanic conventionality

of the Piano Trio of 1849–50, to the recreational whimsy of the artfully naive 'Chanson villageoise'.

Delivered by an impressive line-up of French-trained

musicians, including the Debussy Quartet's Dorian Lamotte and Marc Desmons, winner of the Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition in 1995,

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this disc is a persuasive one. The fuller textures of the Trio and Quintet reveal well-matched sonorities that are styled sensitively within the parameters of conventional modern performing practices. The finale of the Trio, for example, is suitably ardent, while the second movement of the Quintet displays a great deal of sensitivity and colour in this truly heartfelt music.

How one relates to the closely miked sound and the prevalence, in Lamotte's solo playing, of a tone that is by turns intense and diffuse (notwithstanding a sensuous and beguiling 'Guitare' performance – some of the best playing on this disc) is a matter of personal taste. Overall this compilation is both fascinating and innovative.

DAVID MILSOM

LOCATELLI 24 Caprices
(L'arte del violino op.3)

Gabriel Tchalik (violin)
EVIDENCE EVCD 002

**A remarkably
successful collection
of the caprices
from Locatelli's
op.3 concertos**

CLAIRE DOUIEB



Gabriel Tchalik here tackles Locatelli's caprices, totally divorced from the concertos they adorn. He reproduces their unprecedented sonorities and meets their formidable technical challenges not only with breathtaking vigour and athleticism but also with commendable artistry.

**Gabriel Tchalik's
intonation remains
remarkably true**

Captured over a three-month period, this reverberant church recording reveals some inconsistency of acoustical context, which may be the result of the extended recording spell, multiple takes or editing irregularities. Nevertheless, the outcome is strikingly successful. Tchalik's intonation remains remarkably true (if sometimes a little sharp) whatever the technical demands. And whereas many violinists sound under pressure

**Gabriel Tchalik:
vigour and
athleticism**



**Jerzy Kaplanek:
beguiling sensuality**

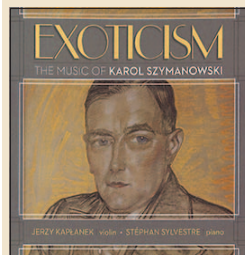
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EXOTICISM

SZYMANOWSKI Violin Sonata in D minor op.9, Nocturne and Tarantella op.28, Song of Roxane (arr. Kochański), Mythes op.30, Prelude op.1 no.1 in B minor (arr. Bacewicz)
Jerzy Kaplanek (violin)
Stéphane Sylvestre (piano)
MARQUIS MAR 81437

**Luxuriant accounts
of the composer's
chamber music
for violin**



Szymanowski's violin music owes its very existence to his friend, violinist Pawel Kochański. 'I am indebted to him alone,' the composer declared, 'for imparting to me his profoundly penetrating, secret knowledge of the violin.' Both of the concertos and virtually every note in this fine recital was written for Kochański, with the exception of the B minor Prelude, a piano original played here in Grażyna Bacewicz's expert arrangement. Jerzy Kaplanek, a distinguished member of the

Penderecki Quartet, and pianist Stéphane Sylvestre form an outstanding duo whose deep musical sympathies allow them to think as one, most notably in the three *Mythes*, whose intoxicating musical flow, freed from the tyranny of the bar-line, creates a series of enraptured phrases of heightened lyrical intensity. In the D minor Sonata they triumph over the music's tendency to luxuriate in heightened mood swings without an especially strong sense of emotional narrative, imparting a beguiling sensuality and volubility to Szymanowski's stream of consciousness that is highly compelling.

The sense of staring at two sides of an emotional coin is also strikingly captured in the *Nocturne* and *Tarantella*, which offsets music of dreamlike, Scriabinesque

**Szymanowski's
'Song of Roxane'
simmers seductively**

'exoticism' (to quote the album's title) with an Italianate, outdoor vigour. The *Song of Roxane* in Kochański's transcription simmers seductively, enhanced by the warm yet tactile engineering. An outstanding release.
JULIAN HAYLOCK

when Locatelli applies the thumbscrews, Tchalik remains unmoved and focused on his musical goals. Admittedly, not all the minute details come across crystal clear, notably in the theatrical nos.2, 8 and 17 or the percussive no.12. But a remarkable proportion of them do, particularly given the awkward extensions in no.21 and the high passagework of no.22.

Even Tchalik seems to have his hands full in the notorious final 'Labyrinth' caprice, which he nevertheless dispatches with fearless abandon and uncanny levels of technical athleticism. However, although he is a persuasive advocate of Locatelli's fertile imagination in the capriccios themselves, he does not consistently display his own in the extempore cadenza opportunities afforded him.

ROBIN STOWELL

SCHUBERT String Quartet in D minor D810 'Death and the Maiden'
JANÁČEK String Quartet no.1 'Kreutzer Sonata'
Debussy Quartet
EVIDENCE EVCD 001

Anguish and intensity characterise a potent coupling



Women and death seem to be the rather morbid connection between the two works on this disc. The Debussy Quartet takes an attacking approach to Schubert's 'Death and the Maiden', driving through the first movement, digging into the strings. Even in the lilting second subject they make more of the composer's accents than his charm.

The second movement has constant intensity, even in its gentlest moments, exemplified by the leader Christophe Collette's anguished moulding of Schubert's filigree patterns – and by his big vibrato. There is plenty more attack in the last two movements, which are rich-toned and forceful.

This is an anguished performance of the Schubert

When Schubert relaxes, the playing is beautiful, but this is in the main an anguished performance.

There is even more anguish in Janáček's First Quartet. Dynamic contrasts are emphasised, melodies colourfully shaped, the sudden outbursts visceral. The gentler passages of the third and fourth movements are sensitively done, understated but full of purpose, and the violent ponticello eruptions of the third movement are positively disturbing. It is an unsettling performance, and that is a compliment.

The recording itself leaves something to be desired. It is close-in, which gives a lot of obtrusive breathing, the balance isn't always clear, and the hall has a thunderous acoustic that can fill a bar of Schubertian silence.

TIM HOMFRAY

TCHAIKOVSKY Violin Concerto in D major op.35¹
ARENISKY String Quartet no.2 in A minor op.35²
Philippe Quint¹ (violin)
Lily Francis² (viola)
Claudio Bohórquez²,
Nicolas Altstaedt² (cello)
Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra/Martin Panteleev¹
AVANTI CLASSIC 1043-2 (HYBRID SACD)

A classic concerto and rare quartet make fascinating companion pieces



Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto thrives on an espressivo intensity full of fast vibrato and generous portamento – distinctive qualities that Philippe Quint indulges to the full here. His unblemished, relatively lightweight sound also proves ideal in gently articulating the work's dazzling pyrotechnics without a hint of forced tone and imparts an angelic purity to the heart-rending strains of the slow movement. Finest of all is the Cossack-dance finale, throughout which the music's fizzing staccato semiquavers possess a sparkling effervescence that keeps everything on its toes.

For an adrenaline-charged surge, delivered at near-continuous white heat, Isaac Stern's 1958 classic recording with the Philadelphia Orchestra in full cry (CBS/Sony) remains a must-hear, yet Quint's more considered approach is also highly persuasive, and is enhanced by his inclusion of a second version of the finale in the edition by Leopold Auer.

The inventive coupling (coincidentally another op.35) is the elegiac String Quartet no.2 by Anton Arensky, composed in memory of Tchaikovsky and scored unusually for violin, viola and two cellos – the central movement is a set of variations on a Tchaikovsky song that later found fame in an arrangement for string orchestra. It receives an impassioned, virtuoso performance here of scintillating élan, glowingly phrased, richly coloured and boldly engineered in the Russian style.

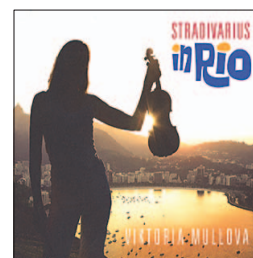
JULIAN HAYLOCK

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Works by Nucci, Vogeler, Costa, Monte, Veloso, Azevedo, Jobim, Baptista, De Abreu & Pixinguinha
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Matthew Barley (cello)
Paul Clarvis, Luis Guello (percussion) Carioca
Freitas (guitar)

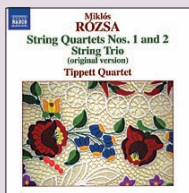
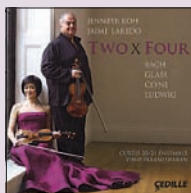
ONYX CLASSICS ONYX 4130

A topical, crossover release from an ever-adventurous violinist and cellist



Could it be that Viktoria Mullova's idea of bringing together 13 popular Brazilian songs was influenced by a release date that would coincide with the football World Cup? As a crossover release it is well-nigh ideal, with Mullova recalling those days when Stéphane Grappelli was the jazz violinist many tried to emulate, and so few succeeded. She certainly uses her fast left-hand fingers to convey improvised flights of fantasy in the way he rather made his trademark. Sliding around the fingerboard, then becoming smoochy at the appropriate moments, she makes her 1723 'Jules Falk' Stradivari sing gorgeously in moments of relaxed eloquence, and also sound aptly sad and sultry when required.

Such popular numbers as 'Dindi', 'Tico Tico' and 'Toada' have been arranged by the guitarist Carioca Freitas, whose style of playing is the real key to the success of the disc. Cellist Matthew Barley has a few heartfelt solo moments, but he mainly occupies a soft-grained role in a backing



ANCIENT AND MODERN

David Kettle reviews new discs mixing music from different centuries

IT'S HARDLY A NEW IDEA, but three recent discs find novel ways to refresh the concept of combining repertoire old and new, refocusing the inquiring light that the two eras can shed on each other. For violinists **Jennifer Koh** and **Jaime Laredo** (Cedille CDR 90000 146) – former pupil and teacher – it's all about music for two violins and string ensemble, in a rich, rhythmic recording with the Curtis 20/21 Ensemble under Vinay Parameswaran. The Bach 'Double' Concerto is their starting point, but despite clipped rhythms and sprightly speeds, it's quite a heavy account, especially the rather sluggish slow movement, thick with vibrato. They do better in the disc's contemporary repertoire,

including two pieces commissioned specially for the project. The atmospheric modal harmonies of Anna Clyne's likeable *Prince of Clouds* get a passionate, enthusiastic performance, and Koh and Laredo revel in the vivid string writing of David Ludwig's elegiac *Seasons Lost*, brilliantly conveying the piece's simmering anger at the effects of global warming in big-boned playing of striking intensity.

An old-meets-new recital from violinist **Hugo Ticiatti** and pianist Henrik Måwe (Orchid Classics ORC 1000038) is entitled *Sonic Philosophy*, and the extensive booklet notes do indeed attempt to convey a lot of philosophical ponderings about the disc's big themes

MARCO BORGREVE



Chameleon technique:
Liza Ferschtman

Jennifer Koh and
Jaime Laredo revel in
vivid string writing



of affect versus colour (no, me neither). It's an eclectic bunch of pieces – from Pärt to Messiaen, Purcell to Takemitsu – but Ticiatti's extraordinarily vivid playing holds it all together expertly, even if pianist Måwe sometimes tends to hamper out his part. Their Messiaen Theme and Variations is thrillingly muscular, and *Arjuna's Transfiguration* by Charles Economou (one of three new pieces getting world-premiere recordings on the disc) is the perfect vehicle for the pair's brilliant tone and volatile energy. Purcell, though, is confined to a few brief improvisations and a somewhat slushy account of *A New Ground* from Måwe.

Best of the trio is a solo-violin recital from Dutch musician **Liza Ferschtman** (Challenge Classics CC 72635),

who shows off a chameleon technique in a challenging set of pieces she describes as a battle – both for herself and her audience. She's gloriously raw and unrefined in Biber's 'Guardian Angel' Passacaglia from the *Mystery Sonatas*, played with disarming purity and sincerity, and goes on to sound like an entirely different player in a frighteningly intense Bartók Solo Sonata, rich with thick vibrato and liberal portamento. She attacks the Berio *Sequenza VIII* with verve, but it's the sustained intensity of her Bach D minor Chaconne that really stays in the memory – moving not just for its inescapable melancholy, but for its expert pacing and its unstoppable power.

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group whose percussion duo uses a variety of instruments to provide both the colour and rhythms of South America.

Mullova is placed well to the front in a suitably pleasing atmosphere that is redolent of a small nightclub.

DAVID DENTON

TICKLE THE MINIKIN

Works for lyra viol by Mace, S. Ives, Coleman, Taylor, Jenkins, Young, Steffkins, Esto & Anon

Robert Smith
(viola da gamba)

RESONUS CLASSICS RES10132

An exemplary showcase for the music of a forgotten member of the English viol consort



This 35-track disc features accounts of 17th-century English solo lyra viol music, sourced from two collections, particularly the British Library's Manuscript Mus.249. It comprises dances and other pieces by the eight named and some anonymous composers. Grouped in sequences according to the eight different tunings

Robert Smith's readings are technically assured

demanding, this repertoire exploits multiple-stopping, implied polyphony and a variety of expressive devices typical of 'the lyra way'.

Lacking a suitable lyra viol, Robert Smith uses a seven-string bass viol with the seventh string removed and fret positions modified as necessary. His tone is sonorous and his readings are technically assured and mostly musically engaging, although his characterisation of the unattributed pieces in Lancashire Pipes tuning

seems a touch under-explored. Nevertheless, the dances by Jenkins, Young and Steffkins are strongly projected and he captures the spirit of the anonymous 'Thumping Almaine' and the two most extended items, 'Carillon' and 'Jemmye', nurturing nuances of phrasing and tempo, as well as a variety of ornaments, with care and refinement. He sometimes introduces left-hand pizzicato ('Thumpe'), and he even includes a col legno effect when beginning an Air by Mace.

The exemplary recorded sound enhances this lyra viol showcase, which, though demonstrating fascinating sonorities long neglected, may test the attention span at one sitting.

ROBIN STOWELL

MÄNGLEIK
Jo Einar Jansen,
Johanna-Adele Jüssi
(violin/octave fiddle)

DUO JANSEN/JÜSSI JJ 1401

A playful selection of music celebrating two styles of fiddle tradition



The opening, declarative fiddle phrase of 'Mängeleik' (which translates as 'game'), sets the tone for this album: simple, vigorous and playful. The fiddle is the instrument of ceremonial dance in folk cultures right across northern Europe, and that spirit permeates every moment of this recording. It brings together two talented young folk fiddlers from either side of the Baltic: Johanna-Adele Jüssi from Estonia and Jo Einar Jansen from Nord-Trøndelag in northern Norway. The duo's respective cultures have much in common, as demonstrated by side-by-side polkas 'Jostein/Musimaias', but there are subtle differences in styles. The Norwegian melodies tend to be courtly and delicate by comparison with the more earthly, vivid and mischievous Estonian pieces.

It is with the latter tradition that the fiddle duo is such an effective vehicle. With performances that feel

Jansen and Jüssi breeze through frequent shifts in pace

spontaneous and yet are noticeably well-crafted, Jansen and Jüssi breeze through frequent shifts in pace and texture. From off-kilter unison tunes to high ornamental melodies over an open-string drone accompaniment, their playing is always varied and inventive. At 15 tracks, 'Mängeleik' is a shade too long to feel like a careful selection, but the album demonstrates why the violin – and, for one track here, the growling, whispery octave fiddle – has such strong sway over Nordic folk music.

TIM WOODALL

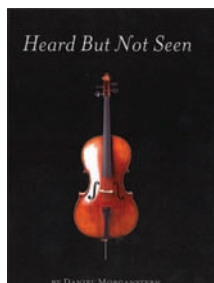
BOOKS

HEARD BUT NOT SEEN

Daniel Morganstern
Ed. Elaine Fine

92PP ISBN 9781496049421

CREATESPACE \$13.50



In his short but compelling memoir, US cellist Daniel Morganstern refers to the 'leapfrog theory' of career management, which involves proactively creating one's own opportunities. In self-publishing this book, he provides a concrete example of how he has done this throughout his career. That career includes more than four decades as a solo cellist, for both the American Ballet Theatre at New York's Metropolitan Opera House and for the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

Morganstern is exceptionally, often brutally, honest about himself

As the cover blurb accurately attests, Morganstern 'offers a lively picture of the times, gives candid portraits of his teachers, particularly Leonard Rose, and presents human sides of many conductors he worked with.'

His personal story both charts a successful and satisfying musical life and illuminates an important period in America's musical history. Morganstern also offers a wealth of personal and professional advice, recalling words of wisdom such as that of concert manager Frank Salomon:

'You are doing the right thing by managing yourself, because no manager will ever work as hard for you as you will work for yourself.' And there are numerous practical musical and cellistic suggestions, often concerning preparation techniques for performing successfully under pressure. Some of the latter ideas can be found in other published works by Morganstern – his *Fundamentals of Cello Technique and Musical Interpretation*, *Practice for Performance*, and the preface to his *Cello Solos from Opera and Ballet*, as well as various articles (plus editions of a number of concertos with commentary, preparatory exercises, and accompaniments arranged for a second cello) – but here they are refined and distilled, or conveyed somewhat differently.

Morganstern is exceptionally, often brutally, honest about himself. He relates how, for a New York recital, he decided to play down an octave the difficult high F sharp that one has to pluck out of the air in the Adagio of Brahms's Clarinet Trio, and was rewarded with *New York Times* critic Donal Henahan calling him 'a first-rate cellist' but asks, 'I wonder what he would have said if I took the first option and missed the shift.' He quotes US statesman Dean Acheson's quip that no author comes out second best in their own memoir, and then counters it by saying: 'In this case I clearly came out second best to Leonard Rose.' And in other places, he so perfectly reflects the commonly encountered performer's fluctuation between insecurity and self-confidence that in some anecdotes his thoughts or actions seem to border on either hysteria or arrogance.

More dates and an index would have been useful and, regrettably, there are no photos – presumably they would have

added to the publishing cost – and a few misspellings were overlooked in proofreading (the actor David McCallum is referred to as 'McCullum', Russian pianist Emil Gilels becomes 'Giles'). But these small deficiencies do not significantly detract from what is an engaging, enlightening and heartfelt narrative.

JEFFREY SOLOW

ALL THINGS STRINGS: AN ILLUSTRATED DICTIONARY

Jo Nardolillo

158PP ISBN 9780810884434

ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD £44.95



Ambitious in its scope, this illustrated dictionary bills itself as a one-stop resource, covering all the terminology a modern string player could ever need. Violinist and violist Jo Nardolillo – herself a player of new music and jazz – spreads the net wide, so that the glossary of terms covers 'all genres and playing styles' (Western, that is) from classical and historically informed to jazz and Bluegrass.

The book is elegantly set out, packed with invaluable nuggets of knowledge and dotted with helpful illustrations by double bassist T.M. Larsen. It's a lovely book to browse through – who knew a 'doit' was the jazz term for ending a note with an upward slide? Or the difference between a Georgia shuffle and a Nashville shuffle? And I'd never before come across the 'violalin' – as you might imagine, a hybrid between a violin and a viola. There's a good sweep of entries on stringed instruments from around the world, taking in the Javanese *rebab* and Russian

gudok among many others. The detailed chart of bow strokes (with their notation, clues on their execution and a note of their names in French, Italian and often German too) is brilliantly informative, and there are some very good explanations of lutherie terms.

Nardolillo also makes a fine attempt to include short biographies for the most influential luthiers, pedagogues and performers. Inevitably these are selective – for example, she apologises for leaving out David Oistrakh, and luthier G.B. Guadagnini doesn't get a mention. The heroes who do make the cut are in limited number, but they include Paganini, Heifetz, Stradivari and Ysaÿe. In such a male-dominated field, I heartily approve of Nardolillo's rather partisan inclusion of two female 20th-century violist-composers: Rebecca Clarke, for her achievements in blazing the trail for women in art music; and pedagogue Lillian Fuchs – the first to perform and record Bach's Cello Suites on the viola.

All told, it's a great resource for students and teachers, and even includes a huge list of books for further reading around the subject, grouped under headings such as 'repertoire', 'ergonomics and healthy playing', 'orchestral and ensemble playing' and 'pedagogical treatises'. For me, the only niggle was that Nardolillo could perhaps have given coverage to extended string playing techniques of the past 50 years, but then again her focused approach has, I'm sure, made the difference between producing an appealing book of manageable size and creating a huge and unwieldy tome.

CATHERINE NELSON

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Karl Klier & Co.....	109
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Les Bois d'Harmonie.....	109
Michael A. Sowden.....	109
Peter Mach.....	109
PetzKolophonium Vienna E.U.....	82
Rivolta.....	109
Strad Pet.....	109
Stretto.....	106
Things 4 Strings LLC.....	82
Touchstone Tonewoods.....	110
Vann Bowed Instruments Ltd.....	110
Wittner GmbH & Co.KG.....	61
Wolf Music Products.....	53

COMPETITIONS

Franz Schubert and Modern Music/ University of Music and Performing Arts Graz.....	97
Verein Boris Goldstein Violin Competition.....	86

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A. Cavallo Violins LLC.....	73
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Carnegie Hall.....	82
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Guildhall School of Music & Drama.....	35
Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.....	40
Juilliard School.....	3&81
Lafayette String Quartet.....	43
Lawrence University.....	86
Manhattan School of Music.....	74
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North Bennet Street School.....	110
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Stony Brook University.....	93
Texas Christian University.....	76
The Boston Conservatory.....	93
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University of North Carolina School of the Arts School of Music.....	6

FESTIVALS

Macao International Music Festival.....	23
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FOR SALE

Stagefright.....	91
------------------	----

MAKERS

Affortit Historical Bows.....	111
Benoit Rolland Studios.....	67
David Bromberg & Associates.....	94
David Gage String Instrument Repairs	106
David Samuels Bow Maker.....	86
Henri Delille Violins.....	106
Horst John & Cia. Ltda.....	111
Luis & Clark.....	62
Nicholas Frisz.....	111
Rappas Violins.....	111
Scott Cao Violins.....	93
Snow Stringed Instruments.....	61
Stearns Violins Inc.....	106
Tetsuo Matsuda Violin Studios Inc.....	111
The Magic Fluke.....	111
Thorsten Theis.....	111

PUBLISHERS

Ries & Erler Berlin.....	111
--------------------------	-----

RECORD COMPANIES

Chandos Records Ltd.....	97
--------------------------	----

STRINGS

D'Addario & Co Inc.....	9&25
Jargar Strings.....	17
John Pearse Strings.....	111
Larsen Strings A/S.....	13
Pirastro GmbH.....	44
Thomastik-Infeld GmbH.....	2/IFC
Warchal s.r.o.....	50

TRADE SHOWS

CremonaFiere S.p.A.....	76
-------------------------	----

In the next issue

October issue on sale 23 September, UK

- **BROOKLYN RIDER** The offbeat New York-based quartet with a passion for modern repertoire and collaborative work



Brooklyn Rider

- **MANTUA MAKERS** The lives and intertwined careers of 18th-century luthiers Antonio Zanotti and Camillo Camilli
- **LEARNING THE FINER POINTS** A contralto viola by Girolamo Amati undergoes a detailed micro-CT scan
- **LETTER FROM WINNIPEG** A report from the 2014 International Cello Festival of Canada

PLUS

- **IN FOCUS** Analysis of a 1675 violin by Cremonese luthier Francesco Rugeri
- **MASTERCLASS** Tips on performing Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*
- **TRADE SECRETS** Marcus Klimke describes his method for adapting rib structures
- **PRACTICE DIARY** Bassist Christine Hoock prepares for a hectic tour

100 YEARS AGO

'L. H. W.', a regular contributor, airs his feelings on why 'luxurious sentimentality' should be shunned by string players everywhere



A SUBTLE and metaphysical article was contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly* (August 1904) by Daniel Gregory Mason. His thesis was based on the distinction—not always so firmly insisted upon—which he draws between discord and dissonance and their relative psychological values. Discord, musically, is reflected by discord morally. Dissonance, which represents trial, temptation and labour, leads eventually to peace and perfect balance.

Recognizing that music is lifted clean out of the domain of mere entertainment into that of morality more emphatically even than any other art, it behoves those of use who have adopted it as a profession to analyze it psychologically.

The commonest phase—that of sentimentality—becomes absolutely degrading when rendered by unrestrained, uncultured, "one-idea" nature, and the epitome of such degradations is the itinerant player's version of "The Broken Melody," Elgar's "Salut d'Amour" or "The Rosary" on a Chinese fiddle or a "Stroh" violin—any one-stringed thing to give peculiar effect to the all-devouring yearningness. All very well in the street, you may say, but imitators are to be found in the

drawing-room, at parochial concerts, and even in the class-rooms of unprogressive music schools. Why? Because sentimentality provokes an immediate, cheap, and easy response. It is patent as a poster, dangerous as suggestive pictures, a prompt introduction to intimacy of the most common, least worthy sort. There is no kinship between sentimentality and real passion. The luxurious sentimentalist is as capable of real passion as froth is of supporting pressure. The one is feeling spilt, loose, sprawling and ineffectual; the other feeling pent up, torrential, magnificently potential. Sentimental effects, then, such as excessive portamento, tremolo, *tempo rubato* and pulseless *rallentando* should not be taught or encouraged in pupils by violin teachers where there is already an obvious natural tendency to such emotionalism.

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Double Acts

Inside views on relationships in the string world

The husband-and-wife Alexander technique tutors discuss their approaches, their simultaneous careers as double bassists, and performing a Judith Weir premiere

JUDITH KLEINMAN

PETER AND I MET IN 1986. We were both playing double bass for an open-air concert at Kenwood House in London, and discovered we had a lot in common. We were both starting courses in teaching Alexander technique, and both of us were fascinated by that approach to playing. We kept in contact from that first meeting and compared notes while we were on our different courses. We were coming at Alexander work from slightly different perspectives, so we were able to make different connections with the technique.

WE WORKED AS FREELANCE MUSICIANS in London for a while. Together, we played in the London Classical Players under Roger Norrington, who was inspirational – the historical performance scene was developing and we toured the world and recorded at EMI Studios. We had to learn new instrumental techniques and Roger encouraged experimentation, so we'd play to each other while practising at home. In 1989 Peter was offered a position as a double bass professor at the Royal College of Music (RCM), and I joined him there as an Alexander teacher soon after.

OUR TEACHING STYLES

complement each other. If a player wants specific advice about the set-up with their instrument, for instance, I might refer them to Peter; one of my students wanted a lot of technical feedback about her chin rest and shoulder rest and how they affected her playing, and Peter knew more about that side of things. He has a fantastic ability to take a step back: he has a calm, objective attitude to thinking, which I find very supportive.

WHEN WE WERE WRITING OUR BOOK *The Alexander Technique for Musicians*, one of us would write a section and then the other would edit it. A lot of the editing process came from us reading parts to each other: Peter had a technical approach to language, I'd be a little less formal, and we'd meet somewhere in the middle.

PETER'S IN THE SCHUBERT ENSEMBLE and has introduced me to so much incredible chamber music over the years. As a couple, we also love visiting our cottage in South Wales, walking in the mountains with our dogs and tending the garden. I do a lot of reading when we're there, and Peter loves playing golf.

PETER BUCKOKE

MY FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF JUDITH were of someone vivacious and fascinating. Both of us wanted to talk about the courses we were just starting: once you get hooked on Alexander technique, you can become a little obsessive about it. I see it as an approach to life in general: realising your subconscious habits and then finding the tools to change. We were developing our interest in these ideas and it's essential to discuss new ideas.

WHEN I JOINED THE RCM, Alexander technique was being treated as esoteric knowledge. I saw it as something that should be available to all students and campaigned for more lessons; it turned out that many of the professors had already had lessons themselves and were supportive of the idea. Judith and another teacher came on board and we took it from there.

AS A TEACHER, Judith is creative and imaginative whereas I'm more academic and analytical. We have both become good at observing what musicians do with their balance, breathing and vision when they play. If a student likes to be told what they should be doing, I might be a more appropriate teacher for them, and if they want to take a more creative route and not think in concrete terms, Judith may be better. Sometimes we work together with a large

group of students, in which case I give a verbal presentation, and Judith will be hands-on, so students get the 'psycho-physical' experience that the Alexander technique is all about.

AS A TRAINED DANCER, Judith introduced me to the dance world and we often go to performances at Sadler's Wells. She's come to love chamber music as much as I do, although generally her musical taste is more eclectic than mine – my tastes are quite narrow.

IN 2006 WE PREMIERED A DUO for double basses, which Judith Weir had composed especially for us, in a Schubert Ensemble concert on BBC Radio 3. I've played in the ensemble since 1983 and it's premiered many of Judith Weir's works; she and Judith had worked together at the National Theatre, so knowing us both, she wrote the duo, *What Sound Will Chase Elephants Away?* It meant that, for that special concert, my wife became a part of the ensemble I'd been playing with for the previous 23 years. ■

INTERVIEWS BY CHRISTIAN LLOYD



'Peter has a calm, objective attitude to thinking, which I find very supportive'

JUDITH KLEINMAN



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